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LIGHT AND SHADE AT SCOTLAND YARD

If I have been deceived in laying downe overboldly mine own opinion, I will no less gladly be admonished of it, than readily reforme my mistaking.

Whatsoever other thing is done amis, I protest that it hath escaped of unskill, and not proceeded of wilfulnesse: and therefore, I desire that I may be allowed the benefit of Pardon.

(*Eirenarcha*, W. LAMBARD, 1610.)



Photo by Author

NAWAB SAJJAD JUNG BAHADUR Scotland Yard from the River

LIGHT AND SHADE AT SCOTLAND YARD

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by

H. M. HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM, C.B.E.

Secretary, Metropolitan Police, 1927-1946

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PREFACE

THE international reputation which Scotland Yard has succeeded in acquiring since, in 1829, the first Metropolitan Police Office was opened in a building which formed part of the old Whitehall Palace, arises almost as much from the unchallenged eminence of British crime fiction as from its own achievements.

Few people could give the name of the police headquarters in any other of the world's capital cities, but to the readers of English detective stories (many of which have been translated into several foreign languages), Scotland Yard has become a sort of by-word as a forcing-house for detectives, either of outstanding brilliance or extreme stupidity, according to the particular crime writer favoured.

In either case the impression left on many minds by the reading of thrillers includes several misapprehensions. Some people still fail to appreciate that Scotland Yard is the Headquarters office of the Metropolitan Police only—the police, that is to say, of Greater London—and not a national organization. In fact, as well as in fiction, Scotland Yard officers may take part in the investigation of occasional crimes—mostly murders—committed in other parts of the country, but they only do so on the invitation of the Chief Constable of the local Force. They can't gate-crash on provincial crime. An increasing number of British Forces have excellent and highly-trained detective departments of their own and the cases in which Scotland Yard is called in are usually those occurring in places where murders are rare and where the local Force feel that the assistance of experienced and scientifically equipped investigators is desirable.

Another common misapprehension, produced not so much by crime fiction as by the Daily Press, is that the Criminal Investigation Department is Scotland Yard, that is to say that not much else beyond the investigation of crime goes on within its gloomy walls.

The rest of the things that happen there are not news to the extent

that crime is. There is little drama in the wide variety of administrative affairs that occupy the time of the many hundreds of police officers and officials who constitute the five Departments other than the C.I.D. The traffic side features in the Press of course from time to time. Accident figures get half-hearted publicity, though it is painfully difficult to work up much excitement about a problem to which no solution can be offered in less than about fifty years. Then, every few days, a leader writer discovers that the police are wasting their time harrying motorists when they should be concentrating on the "crime wave". These critics seem to forget that practically all traffic laws are, directly or indirectly, related to safety and that the saving of life may be almost as important as Lady Thingummy's jewellery or even as the hoard of bank notes "lifted" from the black-marketeer's safe in Waltham Green.

After all it has to be borne in mind that for nearly 120 years a primary function of police duty has been the "protection of life and property", not, be it observed, of "property and life", and, when that definition was first evolved, property was far more reverently worshipped than it is to-day.

Apart from such matters, most of the work carried on at Scotland Yard does not come often under the limelight of publicity, but that does not prevent it being of great interest, at least to those who carry it out. Police activities touch the life of the community at many points and anyone concerned in their control who can find interest in the vagaries of human behaviour, can hardly fail to derive profit, entertainment and sometimes amusement from the handling of the day-to-day business of a big police headquarters.

Some of the interest also lies in the differing personalities of the toilers themselves. For one reason or another these toilers include a much wider variety of "types" than would normally be found in a Government Department or a place of business. The actors who move—or have moved in the last two decades—across the Scotland Yard stage have included soldiers, sailors, airmen, Governors-General, barristers, solicitors, medical men, policemen (from constables to Assistant Commissioners), clerks, executives and administrators, each having his own educational and social background and each his own outlook on life.

These are some of the reasons that lead the author of this brief record—covering a period of over eighteen years (1927-1946) under five Commissioners—to hope that some of the actions of these actors

and some of the affairs they dealt with may be of sufficient interest to justify their publication. If he is mistaken, the fault must, he feels, be rather with the narration than with the subject.

Finally, let him who seeks crime thrills or the revelation of sensational secrets ask for his money back at once or get the library to give him something else. His meat is not here. But he who takes pride in the achievements of his race, in peace as well as in war, may perhaps, in perusing these pages, reach the satisfactory conclusion that Great Britain has led the world in at least one important phase of social development. The correct principles of law enforcement are a vital element in the progress of human civilization and in this respect we may safely claim to have blazed a trail for the rest of the world.

I acknowledge with gratitude advice received on certain passages from Sir Russell Scott, Mr. T. MacD. Baker and Miss Dorothy Peto. This acknowledgment implies no endorsement by them of any statements made or opinions expressed in the passages on which they kindly advised. I am grateful also to Sir John Moylan and Mr. Charles Reith for permission to quote from their published works.

CHAPTER I

1927-8

If anyone has doubts as to the fickleness of public opinion, a study of police history could hardly fail to convince him.

It is one of the basic principles on which the British police system rests that the approval and support of the public are essential for successful operation. And yet that approval has in fact fluctuated in a most remarkable way between somewhat exaggerated adulation and equally exaggerated vilification.

The most modern example of such a swing was in process of occurring at the time when I was offered and accepted the position of Secretary to the Metropolitan Police. It was the autumn of 1927, the last year of the Horwood régime. Little more than a year previously the conduct of the police during the general strike had so impressed the public that a subscription list had been opened by *The Times* newspaper. In quite a short period a sum of nearly a quarter of a million pounds had been contributed by many thousands of grateful citizens all over the country, particularly in London. The newspapers had vied with one another in singing the praises of the men whose patience, fortitude, tolerance and firmness had contributed so much to preventing the general strike from being the bloody disaster that many people anticipated.

But now, in 1927, the pendulum was already swinging back and in quite a short time the same Press and the same public were to become suddenly convinced that the same police were a lot of corrupt, oppressive perjurers who delighted in applying third degree methods to innocent persons.

This was just another case of history repeating itself. At irregular intervals during the 117 years of its existence the Metropolitan Police had been subject to these periodical crises, when relations with the citizens of London had become dangerously strained.

After such a period in 1906, when the strained relations had found

an outlet as usual in the appointment of a Royal Commission, a *Times* leader writer dealt with the phenomenon in fairly forceful language.

It is not without interest to re-read this leader now, if only because what was then written might have been applied to a number of previous and subsequent situations.

What *The Times* said on 24th December, 1908, was this :

“THE POLICE AND THE PUBLIC.

“In 1906 the public had searchings of heart concerning the efficiency and trustworthiness generally of the men who guard its peace. ‘Cases’, ‘scandals’, and other toothsome articles of consumption for sensation-mongers both in and out of Parliament, such as arise periodically in connection with police work, were this time taken seriously, and a Royal Commission was appointed to ascertain and report precisely how matters stood.

“The main ‘findings’ of the Commission everyone knows. Patiently, laboriously, and pitilessly the Commissioners heard, investigated, and delivered judgment upon the ‘awful examples’ of so-called police perfidy, brutality, and stupidity which had been previously dealt with in the Courts and advertised in the Press. Encouragement was given to everyone who had been injured, or imagined that he had been, by police interference, police laxity, or a policeman’s guile, to come forward and state his case. Moreover, the inquiry into such cases was conducted openly. There was no burking of evidence or hushing up of inconvenient outcry behind closed doors. The result of these investigations has been to prove beyond all cavil or doubt that our police force is a credit to the men who are responsible for it, and a source of pride to every Englishman who is acquainted with police administration in other countries.

“This being the finding of the Royal Commission, it would seem that no one, however jealous for the honour and reputation of the police so shamelessly and falsely attacked before the Commission was appointed, need fear that such attempts will be made again ; or that there is danger that any serious misunderstanding will arise in the mind of the ordinary public with regard to the general character and efficiency of its men in blue—at least for many years to come.

"Unfortunately for the police and the public, it is not at all likely that this will be the case.

"When that time arrives—we will say next year or, at most, the year after—this 'public opinion' of ours will be quite ready to begin again, devour with gusto and credulity another 'shocking police scandal' and vehemently demand 'reform'.

"The truth is that most people have no real knowledge of a policeman's life.

"Consequently, no sooner does some person with an axe to grind, or a grievance to air, stir up mud against the police than every one of us pricks up his ears, and is ready to take seriously the most absurd lies and swallow the shallowest slander without a grain of salt. This is a very unsatisfactory state of things—unfair to the police and dangerous to the public.

"The public cannot expect to be served as it would wish by men who know that, whether they do well or ill, at the first breath of calumny the very people to whom they give their best, are ready to believe almost anything that detractors, however ignorant or 'interested', choose to allege against them."

It may be that there is something inherent in the police function *vis-à-vis* the public whom they serve, which stimulates a suspicious attitude. This was certainly the case at the start when in 1829 the first "Peelers" made their appearance in the streets of London and were greeted with execration and ridicule by press, public and parliament.

Throughout the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries poor old London had been in a very bad state of health. The extent of the lawlessness which prevailed at that time may be gathered from contemporary records, books and pamphlets, though many standard histories of the period fail to give it the prominence which its importance would seem to deserve. In a book written by a City magistrate in 1797 there is a detailed analysis of the crime of the period. The population of London was then one and a quarter millions and the writer estimated the number of criminals as 115,000 or about one in every ten persons. Anyone wishing for a more dependable account of the period is recommended to have a look at Charles Reith's three recent books, the *Police Idea*, *Police Principles and the Problem of War* and *British Police and the Democratic Ideal* in which the truly appalling state of affairs in London at that time is described.

The two following paragraphs, quoted from *Police Principles and the Problem of War* give a graphic picture of life in our capital city during the eighteenth century:

"In London in the eighteenth century every privately-owned dwelling-house was an armed stronghold. The citizen slept with his arms within reach. The beds of the period were made complete with shelf for a blunderbuss beside the pillows. Thieves and highwaymen made walking out unsafe except in the presence of an armed guard. A Prime Minister, Lord North, was robbed in daylight by a highwayman in Piccadilly, who fired at, and wounded, a postillion. A Lord Mayor, in the presence of his servants and retinue, was threatened and robbed in daylight at Turnham Green. So inevitable was the highwayman that it was the custom of citizens when travelling to keep a sum of money in a special pocket 'for the first who asked for it'.

"Worse still was what the community suffered from the helplessness of law on the many occasions of outbreak of mob violence. These occurred with increasing frequency, and to the accompaniment of increasing terror and dismay on the part of the inhabitants of towns, especially London."

We like to describe ourselves, or to hear ourselves described, as a law-abiding nation, but this peep at conditions in the eighteenth century makes one wonder whether docility and respect for authority are to any marked degree inherent in us. Until we discovered the right way of ensuring a fairly general respect for law, the percentage of violently anti-social persons who were prepared to take advantage of the weakness of the law's right arm was pretty high.

Police inefficiency was not the only cause of the bad state of affairs at that time. Poverty, cheap gin, frightful housing conditions, a corrupt Magistracy and a savage penal code were other contributory factors. But a few enlightened politicians, inspired by the writings of Dr. Colquhoun, the brothers Fielding and others, gradually came to realize that the two first things were to moderate the penal code and to re-organize the police. That frightful consequences would result from either of these reforms was of course confidently predicted by the reactionaries. It seemed obvious to them that if you reduced the violence of your punishments you would reduce also their deterrent

effect. Their simple minds could not be expected to consider such subtleties as the brutalizing effect of excessive penal severity or the incentive to violence and murder produced by the imposition of the death penalty for trivial offences. In spite, however, of these gloomy forebodings a series of legislative changes designed to reduce the severity of sentences were made by Peel during the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

The objections to police reforms were also vigorous. Apart from the natural lack of enthusiasm for police efficiency amongst the criminals themselves, there were those who had found that the organization of disturbances and riots was an effective way of intimidating Governments. They quite rightly suspected that a properly organized police might reduce the efficacy of this weapon. Then there were the beadles, parish councillors, vestrymen and other local officials, who clung to the old parochial system, in spite of its obvious inefficiency, because it gave them the discretion to manage—or mismanage—the business with all its attendant jobbery and nepotism. Centralization would involve them in having to pay contributions without any say in the administration. It goes without saying also that the parish constables and watchmen themselves who saw their livelihood threatened were vigorous opponents of the new idea. They could hardly be expected to take an entirely objective view of their own performances or to appreciate that it was their individual and collective failure that made a radical reform, sooner or later, inevitable. It is strange now to read that great magistrate Sir John Fielding's contemporary exhortation to constables and to compare the fine sentiments it contains with the low standard of actual conduct.

Sir John, as will be remembered, was the blind half-brother of Henry Fielding, and the originator of the Bow Street runners and patrols. Writing nearly 200 years ago, he said:

“If a constable has a due regard for religion, the oath he takes to do his duty will have a proper influence on his conduct. If he considers the respect that is due to the laws of his country he will never connive at the breach of any of them; and if he executes his office with diligence, candour and humanity he will secure to himself the confidence of the people, strengthen his own authority, and be esteemed a valuable, useful, and worthy member of society.”

But perhaps the most honest group of objectors were those who saw in a centrally-organized police force under the control of the Home Office, a very real threat to their legitimate liberties. They feared the formation of a force which might be used by Governments to impose their will on the population and they felt vaguely apprehensive of what they regarded as a potential spy-system under the control of the authorities. Developments in certain continental countries gave a degree of colour to such misgivings, which were often genuinely and honestly felt.

It is not therefore very surprising that with all these varied grounds for opposition the new policemen met with such a chilly reception. It took nearly ten years for the pendulum of public and press opinion to swing. The history of the Metropolitan Police during this decade was a tale of woe if ever there was one. All ranks, from Commissioner to Constable, were subjected to such frustrations, ill-treatment, injustice and suffering that it is hard to imagine why any of them stuck to their jobs at all. Many didn't. The wastage rate was very high through resignations, dismissals and injuries. There were no pensions and men incapacitated were either left destitute or given, sometimes, a miserable little gratuity. In high places and in low, the new force was beset with enemies. The Commissioners were opposed and obstructed by Home Secretaries and their advisers at the Home Office, whose control was close, constant and detailed. The most reasonable requests were refused or neglected; restrictions on expenditure were rigid and crippling.

In 1834 the feeling against the police was still so strong that a verdict of "justifiable homicide" was recorded by a jury when a policeman was killed in dealing with the disturbance in Coldbath Fields, and the people of London registered their cordial approval of this verdict by raising a public subscription for the benefit of the jury. Within a few years of this sinister episode, it began to dawn on these same citizens that they might have misjudged the new development. The despised Peelers had shown great fortitude in adversity; the two Commissioners had been patient, tolerant and ever ready to investigate genuine complaints; criminals were being caught; life and property had found a new security and public disturbances were less frequent and less violent. As for their beloved liberties it was discovered that the only one which had been sacrificed was the liberty to be murdered and robbed.

And so it came about that for the first time—but by no means the

last—execration gave place to approval and the Commissioners were urged (unsuccessfully) to extend the functions of their admirable Force to include various other civic activities quite unrelated to normal police work as we now understand it.

How many times since then the pendulum has swung I cannot say. The swing of 1927 was the last of any violence and as that is now over twenty years ago, it may seem that a new crisis is overdue on the normal cycle, unless it be that the machinery for maintaining good relations with press and public has been so improved as to remove the risk of future misunderstandings.

That the public should be capable of working themselves up into a state of angry indignation when they think that somebody has been hardly used by "authorities" is entirely healthy. No better safeguard against anything of the Gestapo or OGPU nature could exist. In another chapter I have developed the thesis that no totalitarian régime can continue for long without a secret police organization, with its spies and informers and third degree. When once such an organization is installed and efficient, a small minority can hold sway over an entire nation almost indefinitely. But the organization cannot even begin to come into existence if the people are watchful and jealous of their sacred rights and liberties and if the first beginnings of encroachment are met with sufficiently stout opposition.

Yes, let the bitch defend her young by all means, but if she insists on going for the postman who is only trying to deliver the letters, he may decide that there are other ways of disposing of letters. In other words, a people which is too ready to believe and repeat bad things about those who serve them cannot expect the most enthusiastic service.

The trouble in 1927-8 arose, as some will remember, from a number of incidents, each in itself of small importance, which were regarded as symptoms of a grave disorder in the police body.

That most dangerous proverb that there can be no smoke without fire had some truth in this instance. The state of health of the Metropolitan Police was not quite as good as it should have been. But it took a couple of years of Committees and Commissions to convince the people of London that their anxieties had been greatly overdone and that there was no question of grave internal malady, only a mild attack of skin disease.

CHAPTER II

LORD BYNG

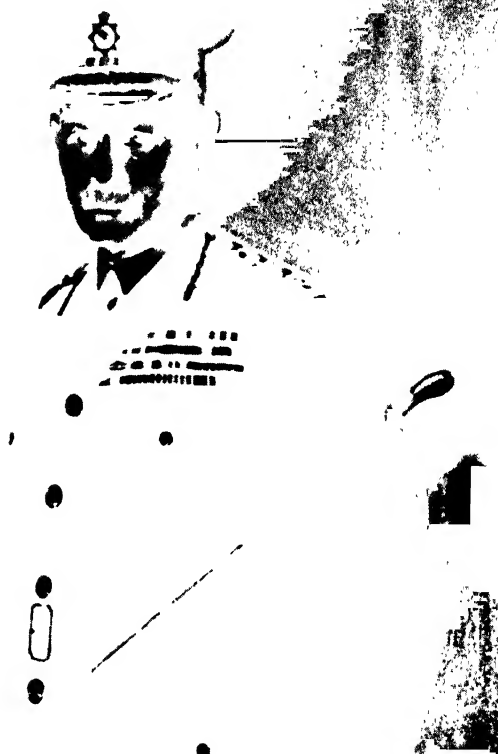
LORD BYNG—or “Bungo” as he was generally called—was a truly remarkable character. At no point was he like anybody else. Usually people who refuse to conform to any type in any respect can be classed without unfairness as freaks, cranks or posers. No one could possibly apply any one of these terms to Lord Byng. Though original and unique in so many ways, he was utterly genuine and it was quite out of the question to doubt his sincerity for a moment.

He arrived on the Scotland Yard scene at a somewhat dramatic moment. As described in the previous chapter the Metropolitan Police were “in the mud”. A succession of unfortunate incidents had shaken public confidence, and when public confidence, enthusiastically assisted by the sensational press, begins to quake, consequences are liable to be out of proportion to causes.

In April 1928 (i.e. some months before Lord Byng’s arrival) I happened to be in Sir Trevor Bigham’s room one day and he said, “Things are very dull. I wish something would happen.” The next day Sir Leo Chiozza Money and Irene Savidge were arrested and charged with indecent behaviour in Hyde Park. That began it, and for a year or two events followed one another with great rapidity.

The “Money-Savidge” case and the events arising out of it were of great—one might say “historical”—importance from the police point of view and I have dealt with them more fully in another chapter. It is enough to say here that Chiozza Money and Miss Savidge were acquitted and, in acquitting them, the magistrate left the impression that he doubted the truth of the police evidence. By the time the Press had applied their magnifying glass to the magistrate’s doubt, it became in the public mind a certainty.

To correct this, a perjury action against the officer was contemplated. The handling of the preliminaries was unfortunate. The famous three hours’ interview of Irene Savidge by Chief Inspector



"Illustrated

Field-Marshal Viscount Byng of Vimy, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

From the oil painting at Scotland Yard by Huseph J. Riddle

Collins at Scotland Yard produced one of those scenes of indignation in the House of Commons which should calm the fears of any who see the possibility of totalitarianism in this country.

The scene in the Commons resulted in a Select Committee to investigate police action. The Committee produced a 2-1 verdict for the police; but public confidence continued to vibrate. Other incidents occurred and a Royal Commission was set up on "Police Powers and Procedure".

One way and another, by the middle of 1928 quite reasonable people had got the feeling that the Metropolitan Police had let them down. The British Bobby had been a national treasure; he had rivalled the Horse Guards in public regard and was the envy of foreigners. Other countries might do a whole lot of things better than we did, but the British Bobby was unchallenged. His admirable qualities were symbolical of the soundness of British character and the mere contemplation of them gave one an internal glow. To have this complacent pride rudely disturbed was more than people could bear.

And so, when the feet of clay were exposed to public view, resentment was natural, if somewhat exaggerated.

Trying one day at this time to instil a sense of proportion into a newspaper editor I said: "How many men does your organization employ?"

"Oh, several hundreds," he replied.

"What percentage of wrong 'uns do you suppose you've got in your pay?" I asked.

"Oh, I don't know. Two to five per cent perhaps."

"Two per cent of the Metropolitan Force would be four hundred men. The cases you've been crying out about number less than a dozen. Can't you put it that way to your readers?"

It is difficult now to realize how strong the feeling was at that time. General Horwood's term of office was expiring; "Jix",* who was Home Secretary, realized that something pretty violent had got to be done and the appointment of a new Commissioner gave him an opportunity. Someone very much out of the ordinary was obviously needed.

Lord Byng, after a great military career and after capturing the heart of Canada as Governor-General, was enjoying well-earned ease at his house in Essex.

* Sir William Joynson-Hicks (afterwards Lord Brentford).

Here was the man, but he did not want to come in the least. He wanted to sit back and contemplate. Few active men had such a complete delight in inactivity. No one could lean on a gate so contentedly as Bungo.

But Jix knew where to find the chink in his armour. He produced the phrase "a stern call to duty". Though Lord Byng himself much disliked this sort of rather dramatic talk, there is no doubt that it was the duty argument that broke down his resistance.

It was on 1st November, 1928, that he walked into his room at Scotland Yard and I believe the uppermost thought in his mind that day was how soon could he find someone to succeed him.

The Commissioner's Private Secretary at that time was a lady—and a very charming one—Miss Drysdale, who afterwards became Lady Bigham when she married Sir Trevor Bigham, subsequently Deputy Commissioner.

She was there of course when the new Commissioner arrived, and went into his room with him. He inspected it silently for a time and then, pointing to the side of the big writing-table, said: "What's that?"

"That's the telephone," said Miss Drysdale.

"Take it away," he replied.

"Oh, but you must have a telephone," she protested.

"What for?" he asked.

"For talking to people. The Home Secretary, for instance. He often talks on the telephone."

"Never in your life," said Lord Byng. "I hate telephones. Take it away."

However, after much persuasion he was prevailed upon to allow it to remain but on the clear understanding that the strictest orders were to be given that no call was ever to be put through to him personally without his express direction.

All went well for a few months. Then, inevitably, by some mistake, the telephone bell rang in the great man's room. He went on with his work for a time, but as it refused to stop he touched the bell for his private secretary. In she went, quite unaware of what had happened.

"Drysie," he said, "it's gone off. I knew it would. Please do something about it."

From the moment of my first introduction to Lord Byng, I realized that official life in his proximity was going to be full of surprises and

entertainment. He was a member of the Travellers' Club, as I was. I knew him by sight but had never spoken to him. When his appointment as Commissioner of Police was announced, a month or two before he was to take office, I felt that it was time to introduce myself, and, seeing him alone in the club one day, I went up to him and told him that I was the Secretary of Scotland Yard. "Oh, are you? Why?" he replied. My complete failure to account for the position clearly gave him much enjoyment. Like everything else about him, his laugh was individual—generous and comprehensive. Not much sound, but everything else that can contribute to a laugh. His mouth, his eyes and his tummy, pretty well all of him in fact, seemed to be involved.

His next remark on this same occasion was almost equally characteristic. "Are they a happy family at Scotland Yard?" he asked, and, as I was unable to report that happy-familiness was the keynote of the Yard at that time, "We must attend to that," he said. "It's important." Needless to say he did attend to it in his own inimitable way.

To say that Lord Byng had a sense of humour would be an understatement. Most people can laugh at a joke or a funny situation, but his mind had the knack of detecting something amusing in nearly every situation and in most people. Whatever question or problem one took to him, it was rare to leave his room without a laugh.

He dealt with the business quickly and effectively and his capacity for seeing the funny side of things had the excellent effect of putting them in their proper proportions. If you asked him to consider or decide a question which he thought you should deal with yourself he would probably give a quite ridiculous and impossible answer, which was his way of saying "Take it away and do it yourself."

For most people who worked close to him he had a nickname. The Deputy Commissioner at that time was Admiral Sir Charles Roys, a big bluff sailor with very square shoulders and a cheerful countenance. Within the first few days of their acquaintance Lord Byng christened him "Old Broadships" and thereafter never referred to him as anything else. It was one of the most perfect nicknames ever invented.

If I were to set down some of the conversations which took place in the Commissioner's spacious office when Lord Byng happened to be in a specially whimsical mood, I should hardly be believed. But I will take the risk of offering one sample.

Summoned to the presence one day by the buzzer, his private

secretary, Miss Drysdale, found him standing by the window looking down on the Embankment. "Come over here a moment, Drysie." Then, pointing down at a very old and disreputable rag-and-bone man who was trundling a barrow slowly along the side of the road, "Do you see that man with the barrow? I think it is one of my nephews. It's certainly very like him. Would you find out please?"

Paper work he loathed. He liked you to state your problem in the shortest possible way, discarding all non-essentials. If you showed any signs of bringing in side issues or unnecessary complications he would quietly decline to take any further interest. Though never reluctant to face an issue or make a decision, he expected every Head of a Department to take the fullest responsibility for the whole of it and not to "put things up" unless it was absolutely necessary to do so.

Occasionally he carried this principle perhaps a little far, but as no harm ever came of it so far as I remember, the inference is that his instinct was generally pretty right.

I remember taking to him the typed draft of his first Annual Report. The Commissioner's Annual Report is theoretically his way of telling the Home Secretary what has happened during the year. Actually it is much more than this because it is printed as a Parliamentary Paper and is given a good deal of attention in the Press. It therefore becomes in effect the Commissioner's annual statement to the public on police matters, many of which are likely to be highly contentious.

It follows that careful drafting is necessary and every paragraph has to be considered from the point of view of what it will "look like" if isolated and duly fitted up with headlines in the *Daily* —.

It was my job as Secretary to draft these Reports from material prepared in the various Departments. I was in effect the editor, writing certain passages and re-writing others, unless of course the Commissioner wished to do any of it himself.

The report for 1928 was Lord Byng's first and, about April 1929, I took him the whole thing (about 100 pages or so of type) to read over.

"What have you got there?" he said. "More garbage?" (Garbage was his usual expression for official files.)

"Yes," I said. "It's your Annual Report for 1928."

"My report?" he said. "Who to?"

"To the Home Secretary. The Commissioner always makes an Annual Report."

"Oh, does he? I wonder why. Let me look."

He took it and turned over the leaves.

"There seems to be an awful lot of it," he said. "Where do I sign?"

I showed him and that was the end (and the beginning) of the Annual Report so far as he was concerned.

I'm not suggesting that this method of dealing with public business is necessarily correct. It involves risks, but they were his risks and he was prepared to take them. He said in effect: "My business is to decide big questions of policy (in consultation, when necessary, with the Home Secretary) and to guide and inspire the Force in a general way. I'm not interested in details of administration or in statements of what has already occurred. If the Heads of the Departments can't do such things, then they are not fit to be Heads of Departments."

Lord Byng's way of dealing with things had of course the good effect of making people more than ordinarily careful and thorough. They had the feeling of being fully trusted and were therefore all the more on their mettle to prove worthy of such complete trust and not to "let down" the man who did the trusting.

When the Government asked Lord Byng to take the Commissionership of Police for a time, they knew that his health was not good. He "had a heart" and was also inclined to be bronchial. His "old tubes" as he called them were not as good as they might be. The result was that if he got a cold the "tubes" were liable to be affected and that put a strain on the heart, which was dangerous.

One effect of this state of affairs was that he was not allowed by his doctors to spend the worst part of the winter in England, and he used to disappear to warmer climes for several months every year. It is a good indication of the extent to which his services were valued that even when this disability became apparent, the authorities pressed him not to retire, as he was perfectly ready to do at any time.

There were naturally those who questioned whether it was right to have a Commissioner of Police who spent a substantial part of every winter in South Africa or the South of France, but they never pressed the matter at all strongly as it was generally appreciated that his "power for good" lay not so much in the day-to-day control of business as in the sort of benign influence he exercised over things. Even when he was present in his office every day it was more a matter of influence than control. His decisions were always on broad lines; he indicated the sort of path which he felt should be followed and seldom gave precise or detailed directions.

He made few changes; he did not re-organize anything. It was his presence and his inspiration rather than any specific actions that produced the results he wanted. What was required was a restoration of public confidence in the police and of police confidence in themselves.

It was whilst he was in the South of France one winter that Admiral Royds ("Old Broadships") died suddenly at a dance at the Savoy. The question of succession was not an easy one and I was sent off to talk it over with Lord Byng. It was my first visit to the Riviera and I was duly impressed, but it did not surprise me in the least to find that he disliked it intensely. The artificial life and atmosphere of plutocratic pleasure resorts was not his cup o' tea at all. Not any of the elaborate attractions laid on at such places appealed to him. Gambling meant nothing to him and one visit to Monte Carlo was enough. He came away disgusted but, needless to say, not without finding things (and people) to laugh at. He got more pleasure out of strolling about the flat fields in the neighbourhood of his Essex home observing the birds and beasts and chatting to the farm hands, than out of any of the synthetic attractions of the South of France. The English countryside, even in its least spectacular form, gave him a contentment which no scenic beauty could provide.

Even when at his home in Essex he spent quite a lot of time meditating in a nearby coppice where, from a seat put there specially for him, all he could see was a group of quite unimpressive trees, some straggly undergrowth and some stinging nettles. This although the Thorpe garden, made by Lady Byng out of a field and a pond, was one of the sights of the county which people came miles to see.

One of the things which endeared Lord Byng to many men and made them his slaves for life was his knack of doing quiet acts of kindness which, one felt, no one else would have thought of doing.

When he had been Commissioner only a few months, it happened that I had to go to a nursing home to have a minor operation. When I came to, after the ether—feeling as one does, very sick and miserable, the first thing I became aware of was that the "old man" was standing by my bed. He knew perfectly well that I was in no condition to be chatty, and as soon as he saw that I was conscious—or partly so—he took my hand, gave it a squeeze and walked out without a word.

Such things he did, and it was small wonder that those of us who were privileged to know him well still enjoy swapping yarns about "dear old Bungo".

The devotion he engendered—and it was nothing less—was by no means confined to his immediate entourage. It quickly infected the whole Force. He spent a good deal of time visiting Stations and talking to Constables, Sergeants, Inspectors—anyone who happened to be there. He seldom discussed police matters unless there was some special thing to be attended to. More often he talked of the ordinary human things of life. I remember overhearing him one day chatting to a constable in a South London Station. Before they had been talking two minutes he was advising the constable about the education of his boy who was a “bit of a scholar.” He discussed the question of that boy’s future career as if it was the one topic in the world that really mattered.

In these casual, and often brief, talks with men he seldom said the ordinary thing or gave the stock advice. Practically always there was a touch of originality or humour in what he said—a new and unexpected angle on ordinary everyday matters. Doubtless his sayings were passed from mouth to mouth in parade sheds and can-tees and it was not long before the Force in general began to realize what manner of man they had for a Commissioner.

I used to go with him sometimes on these visits to Stations. On one occasion we called at a Section House in North London and had occasion to go into the kitchen, where we found a neat, clean, somewhat spherical little cook, in a light green overall, cooking vegetables. Lord Byng talked with her for a few minutes about policemen’s food and the size of their appetites.

A little later as we sat in the car he suddenly said with an air of great profundity: “Have you observed the influence of environment on personal appearance?”

“Yes, I suppose so. What were you thinking of?”

“That nice little cook,” he replied. “Didn’t you notice her astonishing resemblance to a brussels sprout?”

An example of Lord Byng’s knack of producing the unexpected reply occurred when he was attending a public dinner where people were wearing all their stuff. He found himself sitting next to an important legal functionary in a full-bottomed wig. In order to negotiate his soup this gentleman found it necessary to hold back one of the drooping sides of the wig with his left hand. Seeing that Lord Byng was interested in the performance, he said: “You’ve no idea how difficult it is to deal with soup in these things.” “On the contrary, I’ve a very good idea,” replied Lord Byng. “I keep spaniels.”

He produced another beautifully absurd reply when some years after leaving Scotland Yard he was made a Field-Marshal. To a letter of congratulation his rejoinder was: "My pleasure at being made a Marshal is nothing to my Lady's delight in becoming a Snelgrove."

At the beginning of Lord Byng's régime the Press was a great trial. The public were greedy for news of the great "clean up" which they understood was being carried out. Never before had an Army Commander and ex-Governor-General of a Dominion been called upon to take the post of Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis. Obviously the condition of things must be desperately bad to make such heroic remedies necessary.

In the news world, as in any other business, demand creates supply; Press reporters realized that any story about misconduct amongst the Metropolitan Police was good copy and they nosed about for any little tit-bit to form the basis of a new sensation. ANOTHER SCOTLAND YARD SCANDAL was on the placards twice a week and, as often as not, the only foundation was some perfectly ordinary discipline case such as must necessarily crop up at fairly frequent intervals in a body of 20,000 men.

In this atmosphere of publicity and exaggeration Lord Byng found it extremely difficult to carry out his task. There were, it is true, a certain number of "bad men" in senior positions—not at the very top but just below it. A few were real wrong 'uns who had to be eliminated; others were men of whom the worst that could be said with certainty was that their standard of conduct was not up to the level desirable in a senior police officer.

Lord Byng's problem was to carry out the process of elimination where it was necessary and, for the rest, gradually to infect the Force—or the upper stratum of it—with something of his own very high standard of conduct. In this way it was to be hoped that public confidence would be gradually restored.

Quite obviously, a task of this kind could not be carried through in a week or a month. A great deal of investigation and sifting of evidence was needed and if each successive step had to be taken in the limelight of Press publicity—with sinister significance attributed to every fresh move—difficulties were enormously increased.

Something had got to be done about it and Lord Riddell, the Chairman of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, was called in to advise. It did not take him long to appreciate the reasonableness of Lord Byng's plea to be given a chance to get on with his job in his

own way, and arrangements were made for Lord Byng to attend a meeting of the Association and tell them frankly what he wanted them to do—or not to do.

As my responsibilities included Press matters, I was present at the meeting. It was an interesting experience as it gave one a new sidelight on the newspaper-producing industry. Most of the London papers were represented—in a few cases by actual proprietors, in most, I think, by nominees. Lord Byng made his statement in his usual simple and direct manner and obviously secured the sympathy of the meeting right away. This did not prevent the production of a number of questions and objections and a fairly spirited argument, but when they had all said their say, Lord Riddell summed up with characteristic brevity. He said in effect that they all realized the importance of the Commissioner's request and he was certain that everyone would do his best to comply.

Actually the result was a great deal better than we anticipated. All Lord Byng asked was that the Press should treat discipline cases with a sense of proportion and not "feature" them unless there was some good and sufficient ground for doing so. In fact, the newspapers went further and for two years or more entirely avoided any reference whatever to such cases in the Metropolitan Police. I have often quoted this instance when people have argued, as they often do, that the Press (or sections of it) have no sense of public duty and about as many scruples as a Nazi boss.

How many people—even Londoners—can answer this one? I've tried it on several without getting a correct reply. "What important London thoroughfare has one name on one side and another name on the other side?" The answer is "Whitehall". The southern bit of it, just before it debouches into Bridge Street and Parliament Square is called "Parliament Street" on the east side and "Whitehall" on the west side.

In this same Parliament Street close to Grindlay's Bank, a blind newspaper seller has for many years taken his stance. His wife sometimes comes to stand with him. They are a gallant couple who have stood up nobly against an over-generous allowance of the adversities of life.

I introduce this character only because he was one of the many humble people whom Lord Byng befriended. Whether he did more for him than buy his evening paper from him and pass the time of

day, I don't know. Probably. He wouldn't mention such things. Anyway the newspaper man learned to regard Lord Byng as a personal friend and, after he ceased to be Commissioner of Police, hardly a week passed without my having to answer an inquiry as to his welfare. The question always took the same form. Clutching the front of his cap, "That Mr. Graham? 'Ow's our friend Lord Byng?" he would say. "Please give 'is Lordship my best respects."

It was from this man that I received the first news of Lord Byng's death in 1935. "A great gentleman, sir. We can't afford to lose the likes of him."

I happened to know also another of his protégés—the pink-haired pavement artist who used to sit (until his death) outside the Athenæum. His drawing was definitely second-rate, but for undefeatable optimism it would be hard to find his equal. If the rain washed his pictures away, he would often go on sitting there with a comically apologetic expression on his face. Cold seldom discouraged him, though it's hard to think of a much chillier occupation than sitting on a stone pavement with an open iron railing at your back, completely exposed to the east and west and only very partially screened on the other two sides.

Though I don't "hold with" pavement artists (or street musicians) as a rule, I used to talk to this one from time to time and there grew up between us a sort of understanding, which was that I would give him something on wet days only. Rain is of course the very devil for these people, not only because it destroys their handiwork but also because people won't be bothered to fumble for coins when they are all buttoned up in waterproofs or carrying umbrellas. On dubious days when it was not actually raining, if he saw me coming, he would ostentatiously scan the skies, shake his head and say: "Very threatening, sir," with a sly, hopeful smile. Needless to say this little piece of humorous acting usually had the desired effect. He also was greatly upset by Lord Byng's death. He was a more fluent talker than the newspaper man and discussed the sad news with me at some length. Blessed is he who can win the friendship of the humble.

A good indication of the feeling of the Force for the "old man" came to my notice a few years after his resignation. There was a function of some sort at the Hendon College and Lord Byng as an ex-Commissioner was naturally invited. It fell to me to go and fetch him in a car and take him down to Hendon. It was a warm day and we had the car open. When we arrived at the gate leading

into the College grounds, we found that there was a row of mounted men on each side of the drive. They formed a sort of avenue of horsemen from the gate to the entrance.

As soon as the man nearest the gate recognized Lord Byng, his face lit up and he passed the word down the line. The result was a kind of *feu de joie* of smiles and happy faces and, as we drove slowly in, many of the men, quite oblivious of discipline, shouted greetings at their old Commissioner. The incident was clearly spontaneous and genuine and it gave him a great deal of pleasure.

Another good incident occurred when Lord Byng was taken very ill (his last illness as it turned out) at his house at Thorpe-le-Soken in Essex. Sir Maurice Cassidy was sent for late at night. His car started off through Regent's Park at a very unorthodox speed and a constable—quite naturally and rightly—stopped it. When he was told the nature of the errand he threw a quick salute, "Sorry, sir," he said. "Please carry on and tell your man to drive like hell."

During one of my many week-end visits to Thorpe Hall, Lord Byng's house in Essex, a fellow guest was a Canadian friend of his, who was spending a few weeks in this country. I have forgotten his name—Bill something I think it was.

During Sunday morning Lord Byng took Bill — for a walk round the neighbouring fields. The country is flat with few natural features, but such walks with Lord Byng were always interesting as he had a keen eye and a wide knowledge of nature. He would spot the hawk hovering in the distance, recognize bird songs or detect the little foot-prints of the stoat in the dust. He knew something too of local history and during this particular walk he had told Bill that Queen Boadicea was said to have driven her chariot over these flat lands during her fights with the Romans.

After lunch, Lord Byng asked Bill what he would like to do during the afternoon. Various alternatives were suggested—a drive in a car, a visit to Colchester or Clacton, a bathe in the sea or a chair in the garden. But Bill rejected them all. "No, thank you," he said. "This is what I'd like to do. I'd like to go and stand again where old Bodie drove her car."

I have said enough perhaps to indicate what an unsoldierly soldier Lord Byng was and how little his mind resembled the popular idea of the military type. And yet his appointment when it was first announced by Jix as Home Secretary in the summer of 1928 raised what almost amounted to a howl of indignation in the House of Commons

and in sections of the Press. "We submit," said a Labour member, "that his training, his experience and naturally the outlook and point of view which he must have developed by long years of military service are not the sort of qualifications necessary for the post of Commissioner of Police. We object," he added, "to this practice of finding jobs for retired Army pensioners."

Another Labour member—now holding Cabinet office—brought against Lord Byng the frightful charge that he was "in favour of the militarization of the Boys' Training Corps."

In replying to these and other similar criticisms Jix was in a bit of a jam because part of the debate was devoted to attacks on the Force itself. He refused to admit that there was anything much wrong with the Force and in so doing he more or less destroyed his own defence for his quite abnormal action in appointing an ex-Governor General of sixty-six to the Commissionership of Police.

However, he stuck to his guns and when the Labour Government came into power a year later they made no attempt to remove Lord Byng and one Minister who had opposed the appointment had the grace to admit his error.

When Lord Byng retired *The Times* concluded a eulogistic leading article with these words:

"Scotland Yard, in short, owes what it has gained to a personality. The gain is nothing less than the complete restoration of public confidence in the police force and the force's recovery of confidence in itself. The good which Lord Byng has done will live after him. He has set the police officer of all ranks a professional standard which is valued and is not likely to be lost, and he has given an impetus to internal reforms by which London and his successors will profit."

CHAPTER III

LORD TRENCHARD

FUTURE recorders of Metropolitan Police history can hardly fail to rate the four years of Lord Trenchard's Commissionership as the Force's most exciting period since 1829.

Some of the "Trenchard reforms" were universally acclaimed; others were contentious. The merits or demerits of a few are being argued still.

But even the most ardent opponents of some of the things he did must agree that life was never dull when Lord Trenchard was around; and those who were privileged to work in close daily contact with him developed a wholesome admiration for his quite astonishing powers.

Certain of his characteristics might appear at first sight to be somewhat contradictory.

He advocated a high standard of education and raised the general level for new entrants, but he laid no claim himself to scholastic attainments. He admired and demanded clarity of expression and was a discriminating critic of the written word, but he himself possessed little power of lucid expression either in speech or writing.

When he was engrossed in a subject—and that was his normal condition—his thoughts seemed to travel faster than his words. They appeared to be a lap or two ahead, and the poor words, trying madly to catch up, tripped and stumbled to such an extent that an almost unbelievable incoherence occasionally resulted.

In his writings (or rather dictatings, as he seldom wrote more than a line or two in manuscript), he never expected his stenographer to reproduce exactly what he said. It was her business to get the general idea and make the best she could of it. But when she was completely defeated she used to transcribe precisely what had been said and bring it to one of us and ask us to straighten it out.

Here are a couple of samples:

"Have we got men really to do this sort of work? It seems to me that this place is an ordinary fair, like cokernut shies, with the question of a competition for cigarettes. Is it any worse than cokernut shies, or hitting a bat to hit bells, etc.?"

"The only thing that seems to be really serious are the two post offices, and how long has this place been going on?"

"Really it is not seriously intended that we should waste our time in running them in on the subject of what is called greyhound racing, or the game of darts and shoot darts and the gun.

"How much of each is going to be raided if I sanction a warrant?"

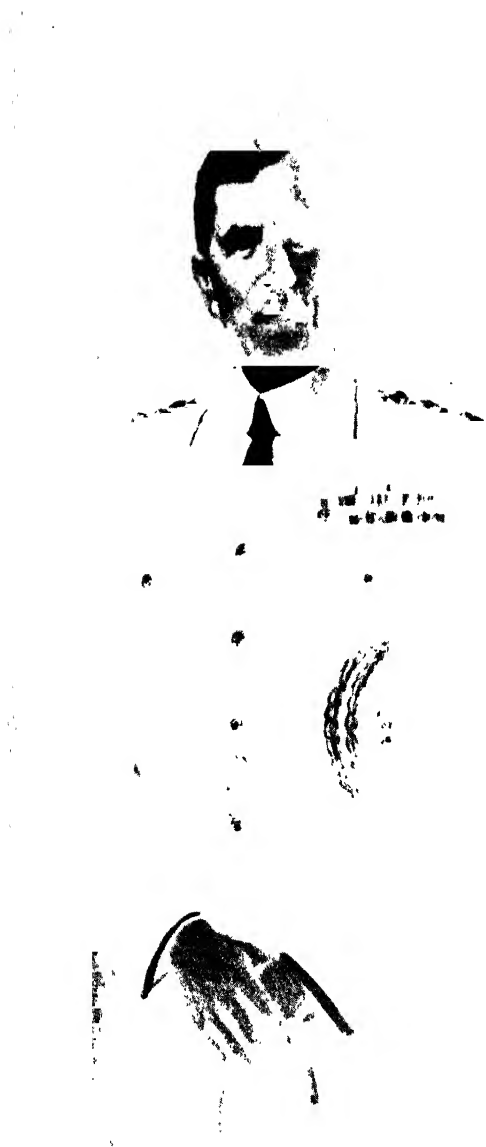
"How many of these cases? Surely not the whole of all the competitions?"

"My dear —,

"With reference to your letter of the 22nd January regarding the appeals by ex-Sergeant A. B. and ex-P.C. Y. Z., these two men were really run in on the same case, but in a different connection. It was really exactly the same case and it was due to the inquiry we had been making here that we discovered what was going on with Sergeant A. B. inside and the man outside at this public house. And while we heard I think anonymously about what was going on there, we found out at once it was true and within a few days of getting on to it it was bowled out, but it was bowled out with finding apparently a policeman conniving at it in the traffic patrols and a sergeant conniving at it who was there."

It is often said (and I had before those days always believed) that a man who cannot express himself clearly is unlikely to have any powers of clear or logical thought. This may be generally a sound proposition, but Lord Trenchard was an exception to this rule—as to many others. Not only could he think with the greatest clarity. He had also quite unusual powers of discriminating between the essentials and the non-essentials, between the important and unimportant, between the permanent and the ephemeral.

He could drag the "guts" out of a complicated problem in a remarkably short time and, when he had done it, and held them up for one to see, one realized at once that they were indeed the real and only guts and that nothing else mattered very much.



Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Trenchard, G.C.B., G.C.V.O.

From the oil painting at Scotland Yard by E. A. Verpilleux, M.B.E.

Most administrative problems present themselves sooner or later—perhaps all the time—in the form of the written word. Reports, letters, memoranda and minutes record the facts and crystallize the views of the *dramatis personæ*. The importance of a subject cannot of course be gauged by the thickness of the file devoted to it. At Scotland Yard discipline cases and individual crimes sometimes amass tens of thousands of written words without being in themselves of any real importance. But the big topics do in fact tend as a rule to produce a formidable accumulation of documents.

Particularly was that so in the Trenchard era, as he insisted that every step should be recorded, every argument clearly stated and every person concerned kept in touch with developments.

And woe betide you if anything was omitted or overlooked. No matter if the slip appeared at page 10 in a 100-page file. He would spot it for a certainty and want to know the reason why.

I remember an instance of this. In reading through a file before passing it to Lord Trenchard, I noticed that about six months previously I had omitted to notify somebody of a decision of which he should have been told. To do so after such an interval seemed unnecessary and I took comfort from the thought that it was not a vastly important omission and would probably be overlooked.

Not at all. Lord Trenchard hadn't had the thing in his hands for an hour before he sent for me and "wanted to know".

One realized by instinct that with him excuses were not a marketable commodity and that complete frankness was the only possibility.

"I was afraid you might spot that," I said, "though it was pretty completely buried."

He laughed in that sudden unexpected way he had and all was well.

People often said that he had no sense of humour. Never was a greater mistake. I admit that it was a peculiar one—all his own—but so were most of his characteristics. It was a complete waste of time to tell him a "funny story", either proper or improper. He just grunted. But unexpected things or remarks would appeal to him as comic and, when they did, his reactions were generous and most refreshing.

When he had been at Scotland Yard only a short time he told me that he proposed to go and sit in the rooms of each of the Assistant Commissioners for a day or two (sending them on leave) to see by personal experience exactly what they did. He asked if I saw any difficulty about this.

"None whatever," I said. "Provided you don't do the same to the Secretary (me)."

"And why not?" he asked rather fiercely.

"Because you'd spend half the day running in to the Commissioner's room and you'd always find it empty."

As he was keeping me extremely busy just then, he acknowledged the thrust and shouted with laughter—more heartily, as it seemed to me, than my mild sally deserved.

Perhaps the truest form of humour is the capacity to laugh at oneself. He could do that. One night I was working with him late at his house at Barnet. I used to go down from time to time, eat rather a hurried dinner and then sit down almost at once and work away till midnight or so. We had just knocked off and were drinking a whisky and soda. He had thrown himself down in an easy chair and relaxed.

"Great little people, aren't we, Graham? We think we're so important."

Lord Trenchard was a severe taskmaster, but he never expected more than he was prepared to give himself. Not as much. And if one felt a bit weary at times and wondered whether there was any sense in the feverish intensity which characterized him and all he did, a flash of humour, a word of encouragement or a sign of appreciation was quite enough to push everything out of the mind except a desire—almost a passionate desire—to do one's damndest to help him and earn his approval.

There are so many stories of Lord Trenchard that it is hard to know which to tell.

He had a biggish conference in his room one day on some subject. About eight people were there and they discussed the matter in hand for an hour or more.

Suddenly Lord Trenchard said: "Get Baker." (Baker was the Solicitor to the Commissioner.) In a minute or two Baker appeared in the room.

"Now, Baker," said Lord Trenchard. "As a man and not a lawyer, what is the defence if they have the thing and you take it and they have it here, d'you see? It's wrong and we've got to stop them, d'you see?"

"What is the thing?" asked Baker rather naturally.

"Kendal has it in his room. Will the law help us? Ask Foster why we are and see the Attorney and put it right."

"But what is the thing?" persisted Baker.

"Please don't interrupt, Baker. Now leave me everybody."

And we all drifted into the corridor to laugh it out together.

One of the private secretaries he had at the Air Ministry came to see us one day and told a good story which they had stored up about him.

He had a passion for lists of things to be done or discussed. "Aides Memoires," he called them, or "Agenda". And nearly every morning he would produce one on arrival and put it in front of him on his desk. It contained all the things he had thought of during the night or on the journey, which needed immediate attention.

The private secretary in question (we will call him Proctor) told us that one morning he came into Lord Trenchard's room at the Air Ministry just after he had arrived. He had gone down the passage, so Proctor inspected the "Aide Memoire" to see what was afoot. The first item on the list was "Abuse Proctor" and, sure enough, as soon as he came back, he started in his own quite special way to point out something that the unfortunate Proctor had done or left undone.

One always knew exactly where one stood with Lord Trenchard. If he was displeased there was not the smallest doubt about it. Similarly, if something had been, he thought, well done, he said so in the most unmistakable terms.

The story of the herd of camels also came to us from the Air Ministry. I can't vouch for it, but I don't see why anyone should make it up.

There arrived one day from Iraq a cable to the Air Ministry to the effect that two herds of camels had been stolen in the night from a local sheikh and driven away into the desert. The sheikh asked whether an Air Force machine could go up and try to spot the herds, so that pursuit could be organized. The question was whether this could be permitted.

"How many camels in a herd?" said Lord Trenchard to the officer who brought him the cable.

"I don't know, sir," replied the officer.

"Well, what's the good of asking me to decide unless I know what I'm dealing with. Go and find out."

From room to room and mouth to mouth throughout the building, the question passed "How many camels in a herd?" But no one, not even those familiar with countries where camels live could give the answer (for the simple reason no doubt that it is the same as the

answer to how many sheep in a flock or how many people in a crowd).

Eventually it had to be revealed to the Master that the Air Ministry could not supply the information.

"Then cable to Iraq," he said, "and you will wait here until the answer comes and telephone it to my house as I am going home."

Late that night the answer arrived and the officer rang up Lord Trenchard to tell him.

"The cable I sent," he said, "was—How many camels in a herd? I have just received the reply which reads as follows: 'We'll buy it. How many?'"

One of Lord Trenchard's peculiarities was an inability to get people's names right. Anything foreign was liable to defeat him and it required a certain amount of quickness to realize that "Moussini" meant a restaurant called "Monseigneur" and that "Dalmatian" referred to another called "Malmaison". Again when he came back from a visit to Germany he said: "Yes, it was very interesting. I saw Gorrington and Gobblers and all of them."

Even with ordinary English names he got frequently tied up and when once he had settled the matter to his own satisfaction it was difficult to get him to change. Sir John Moylan, the "Receiver", with whom Lord Trenchard was in almost daily contact, was "Moylam" to him to the end, and more than one attempt to substitute the correct version failed.

Quite early in his Commissionership I was at his house and, in a conversation, he referred to "Moylam". "Excuse me interrupting," I said. "It isn't Moylam, it's Moylan, and I'm not Howard Graham, I'm Howgrave-Graham, but anyway Graham is enough."

The next morning the first item on the "Aide Memoire" on his desk was "Find out what Howard-Graham's name is." He found out, but I went on being Howard-Graham for a long time.

There were three men in the office with the quite simple names of French, Trench and Frere. They got inextricably tangled up in Lord Trenchard's mind and, as the chance of getting them right was 2-1 against, they soon formed the habit of accepting whichever one happened to be produced.

French went in one day and was immediately greeted as "Frere—I mean Trench." French patiently corrected the error, and it is even said that Lord Trenchard then got so confused that in signing a

document immediately afterwards he wrote "Frenchard" (but I don't vouch for that).

Interviews with the Master were always stimulating. There was a dynamic quality about his discourse—even when somewhat incoherent—which left a deep impression. He would stride round and round the room swinging his key chain and thinking aloud. For the first minute or two one generally wondered what the topic was. He seldom told you. He just started at the point that his mind happened to have reached at the moment when you came in.

I always took a pencil and paper because he would sometimes produce a sentence or expression which was so good that it must obviously feature in the document—whatever it might be—that he was discussing. Also there was always a sporting chance of some pearl of great price being dropped such as "My first duty is to prevent law and order" or "We must have plenty of ammunition up our sleeves."

Many people have tricks of speech. We all know those who say "of course" or "any way" or "sort of" every few seconds. Lord Trenchard's speciality was "d'you see?" He was also very fond of ending up a sentence with "and everything," which seemed to be his version of "etc." or "and so on":

"Yes, I want you to do this . . . so that I can hang my peg on it, d'you see?"

"The route was lined by boy guides and everything."

His metaphors too were often an improvement on the stock versions:

"You can't see the wood for the weeds," and "If you do that you'll put the soup in the cart—I mean the horse in the soup."

These examples, I should say, are all genuine and duly recorded at the time of utterance.

During the air raids on London in September 1940, Lord Trenchard was walking one day down the Strand. He came to a barrier across the road with a police notice directing traffic and pedestrians down a side street. He was in a hurry so he went straight on and no one interfered. Arriving at the other end of the railed-off portion he found a police officer who recognized him and said:

"You know, my lord, you oughtn't to have walked along there. There's a couple of time bombs might go off any minute."

"Was it really dangerous? Might I have been killed?" asked Lord Trenchard.

"Yes, my lord, indeed you might easily have been killed," said the P.C.

"Then why did they let me through at the other end?"

"I don't know, my lord. I think they must have recognized you."

This delighted Lord Trenchard, who told the story himself.

This incident calls to mind a previous one which occurred when Lord Trenchard was Commissioner. There were great crowds in St. James's Park on one of the many festive occasions which occurred about then. It must have been the Jubilee celebrations. The weather was fine and warm and in the evening the park was floodlit. Lord Trenchard, wanting to see, without attracting attention, how things were going, put on an old burberry and a cap and set out on foot.

In the park the police had found that the bridge on the lake became completely jammed so long as people tried to cross it both ways at once, so they had made it "one way only". Lord Trenchard did not know this and started to try and cross against the stream. A constable, seeing him, tapped him on the shoulder and said: "Hi, Daddy, you can't go that way." It is said that when Lord Trenchard turned round and the P.C. saw who he was, he fell backwards into the water and was drowned, but this part of the story is "not confirmed in official circles".

I have referred already to Lord Trenchard's capacity of laughing at himself. This was well exemplified by the pleasure he took in recounting the following incident—which a lesser man might have been inclined to forget.

He was dining out one evening after he had been Commissioner for nearly four years. During that time he had been front-page news in every paper in the country and it might be supposed that any person who took the smallest interest in current affairs would be aware that Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Trenchard was busy making history at Scotland Yard. It happened that during the day on which this dinner party was held, the death of Lord Byng (who had retired from the Commissionership four years previously) had been announced. The lady sitting next to Lord Trenchard had read the news and said to him, "Oh, Lord Trenchard, isn't it sad that dear Lord Byng should have died? Who *will* they find to succeed him as Commissioner of Police?"

Lord Trenchard had "no time" for sickness. He was liable to be annoyed rather than sympathetic when people got ill. This applied

to himself as well as to others. If anybody wanted a verbal "thick ear", an easy way to get it was to ask Lord Trenchard how he was. Even if he had been seedy this was inadvisable. His attitude was almost that of the good people of Erewhon. Illness was a crime or at any rate a thing to be ashamed of. If one were guilty of a dose of 'flu the less said about it the better. It was as unseemly to speak about it as to mention Uncle George's nasty attack of embezzlement.

This all sounds very inhuman. It wasn't really. It was more a façade than anything else—part of the "build-up" that *any* obstacle in the path of the progress of the job in hand was an evil thing. It must be barked at, and if necessary bitten, until it got out of the way.

His private secretary fell ill, I remember, just when the tide of the Trenchard reforms was at the flood. The team involved—including the private secretary—were going flat out. Everything was being done at the gallop. The existing condition of affairs, though it had lasted for 100 years, must be corrected to-day, not to-morrow or next week. The chatty column of one of the London daily papers included an announcement about that time that "the monthly re-organization of the Metropolitan Police would take place weekly in future". It was obviously therefore very wrong and bad of the private secretary to choose that moment for being ill, and Lord Trenchard was like a bear with a sore head when he was told of the offence. "A bear with a sore head" was in fact a peculiarly apt description of Lord Trenchard when things were not going quite as he wished. He strode up and down his cage making curious discontented sounds. He growled at visitors, and experienced people stayed away as far as possible. Some irreverent person who was compelled one day to enter the cage when this was the condition of things, asked me whether it would be a good idea to take a bun with him. I said that I did not think that would be very wise and suggested a cautious approach and the earliest possible retreat.

I have said that Lord Trenchard's attitude to illness was rather a façade than an indication of callousness. This was borne out on the occasion in question. His vexation did not prevent him from sending the sick private secretary half a dozen bottles of champagne to lubricate his convalescence.

It might possibly appear from these last few pages that life at Scotland Yard during Lord Trenchard's Commissionership consisted mainly of merriment. That would hardly be a true picture. Laughter there was, thank God, at intervals, but the normal way of

life was strenuous, the pace was hot and the course was long. That is no doubt one of the reasons why laughter when it came was sometimes liable to be a little out of proportion to the occasion. Laughter is as good for the digestion as for the soul (hence the unattractiveness of the conventional conception of Heaven, which includes no suggestion of even occasional hilarity) and, just as in a tragedy the feeblest joke will secure a disproportionate response from the audience, so also in a period of high tension effort, the intrusion of a little light relief may obtain a welcome beyond its real merits.

Saturday mornings were specially liable to be hectic. It was one of Lord Trenchard's ideas that the short day on Saturday could only be justified if everybody tried to cram into it as much work as would normally be performed in a full day. Perhaps with this in mind, he had a way of starting hares—fast and elusive hares—at about ten o'clock or so on a Saturday morning. Even if there was no special urgency, to-day was always better than to-morrow with Lord Trenchard. When he wanted something he nearly always wanted it at once, and there's no doubt that treating most things as urgent—even if they are not—is one way of raising output. The reason obviously is that the machine works fast all the time instead of only part of the time. Anybody who has dealt with administrative work (and no doubt the same applies to many other kinds of work) will have noticed what a wide margin there is between normal speed of performance and speed of performance under pressure. It follows obviously that the more continuous the pressure the greater the total output.

It is often suggested that high speed produces bad work, and that clearly may be so sometimes. But generally speaking, in my experience, the exact reverse is the case. The man working against time produces better work than the man who hasn't much to do and can take as long as he likes. In other words the over-worked man produces better quality results than the under-worked man. There are limits of course. Over-work beyond a certain point encourages scamping and sometimes necessitates it. It may also cause, or be an excuse for, delays but, generally speaking, harm arising from excess is rarer than harm arising from deficiency. I once said to Lord Trenchard that I thought Mr. — was suffering from over-work. He grunted a dissentient grunt. "I've never yet met a man who killed himself from over-work." Avoiding the somewhat obvious retort that we seldom meet the dead, I agreed that a really genuine case of breakdown

through over-work is not as common as many people think. Boredom kills more quickly. How often it happens that a very busy man only begins to fail when he retires from activity and has no alternative pursuit. I admit of course that worry and anxiety may—and often do—have a bad effect on health. But the man who is happy in his job is more likely to be fit if it keeps him, as it were, on the stretch than if it can be easily “overtaken”.

This digression was evoked by thinking back to the Trenchard era at Scotland Yard. For myself, I never worked harder, I never was fitter and I never was happier. His output was enormous. He was a ten man-power man. He accomplished in four years more than anybody else I’ve ever met could do in a dozen years. There was hardly a feature of police activity or organization that he did not tear up by the roots, examine with a microscope and re-plant—generally improved. If anybody was ever fool enough to justify a practice on the ground of its long acceptance, his immediate reaction was that that was the best possible reason for investigating it drastically.

Everything done, and the method of doing it, had to justify itself. Not only the big things. The little ones too. There are a number of small affairs that police have to attend to. Each one of them has its own little group of orders and regulations founded usually on some Act of Parliament. For each one of them there is an “expert” (or a bunch of experts) at Scotland Yard—someone ready to give the right answer if a conundrum not covered by standing orders arises in one of the 172 Metropolitan police stations. I’m thinking of such matters as firearms, explosives, lost dogs, cruelty to animals, foot-and-mouth disease, missing persons, suicides, street musicians, pedlars, beggars, house-to-house collections, flag days, etc. etc. There are plenty more.

Periodically some point arising out of one of these subjects reaches Commissioner level. It was dangerous to send such a question to Lord Trenchard unless you were ready to stand up to a searching cross-examination on the whole business, starting from the relative legislation and working up through orders, decisions, practice and procedure to what happened last Tuesday at Peckham. This was all very stimulating and thoroughly healthy. The Metropolitan Police organization and methods were overdue for a spring cleaning and, my word, they got it. Every little hole and corner had to be attended to, every bit of furniture had to be mended and re-arranged or thrown away if not essential.

But it is not of course for these small affairs that Lord Trenchard will be remembered. He undertook a number of reforms of a radical kind. When he retired the *Daily Herald*, which had been one of his most persistent critics, wrote:

"Lord Trenchard's reign at Scotland Yard has left an indelible mark on the police organization of London.

"When he took over, in 1931, bandit reign threatened to turn London into a second Chicago. Lord Trenchard changed all that. He brought the police organization to such a pitch that it began to work with the sureness of a machine.

"Looking back over the four years, it is possible to grasp some of the solid achievements—and they are many—of Trenchard rule.

"It was he who, starting with a handful of not very up-to-date vehicles, built up the finest fleet of radio-cars possessed by any city.

"He decided, too, that the scientist must be enlisted in the war against crime. Hence the magnificently equipped Police Laboratory at Hendon—an organization which has not yet had its 'big chance', but which, in the future, is bound to play a great role.

"When he first took over there were reports of unrest in the Force and lack of confidence in the Commissioner. But, with the unfolding of his plans—and better knowledge of the man himself—that feeling died down.

"Lord Trenchard determined that his men should have accommodation fit for human beings.

"He denounced the cold and cramped, badly-lit section houses and authorized the spending of a vast sum on new ones.

"Only a few weeks ago the building of a new section house in Soho was announced; while, in Kensington, a block of flats, with all the latest labour-saving devices, is springing up for the accommodation of married men.

"Again, under Trenchard rule, the much talked of re-organization of Scotland Yard was pushed forward.

"Most criticized of all his innovations was the Police College at Hendon.

"Time alone can tell whether that will prove its worth.

"'Give him a job,' it was once said of Lord Trenchard, 'and he never lets go.'

"The decrease in banditry and other crimes since he took over proves that that assertion is no idle one."

The *Herald* had picked out a few of the things Lord Trenchard did. The following is a more complete list:

1. The Police College.
2. The Short Service System.
3. The Scientific Laboratory at Hendon.
4. The Driving School at Hendon.
5. The Wireless School at Hendon.
6. Formation of a Legal Department at Scotland Yard to take on the work previously done by an outside firm.
7. Re-organization of duties throughout the Force so as to concentrate on essential work.
8. Re-organization of Headquarters at Scotland Yard.
9. The Information Room and Wireless Organization (52 Wireless areas and a car with a receiver operating in each. 2,000 arrests in the first year).
10. Improvement of supervision. Transport Officer, Wireless Officer and Welfare Officer at Scotland Yard. Superintendents at District Headquarters and Crime Chief Inspectors in all Divisions.
11. The four Athletic Grounds (previously only one for the four Districts). System of regular weekly subscriptions by the men to athletics.
12. Inauguration of the scheme for providing better Section Houses, Police Stations and Married Quarters, and for extending Scotland Yard.
13. The Commissioner's Fund to provide income for athletics and charities previously obtained from ticket-selling.
14. The re-organization of statistics. Introduction of the Daily Crime Telegram and of Map Rooms at Scotland Yard and in Districts and Divisions.
15. Abolition of employment "on gratuity" (i.e. employment and direct payment of Police by private persons).
16. Abolition of ticket-selling.
17. Alteration of Divisional Boundaries and extension of the Police Box system. (Started in Lord Byng's time.)

18. Abolition of the old Provident scheme and the introduction of a new official scheme.

It has been said that most of the things Lord Trenchard did have been undone since. That is entirely untrue. The only scheme of his that has gone west definitely and finally is the Short Service System. It was experimental anyway and the principal reason for its failure was not, as it happens, one that was foreseen by any of the critics who opposed the idea at the start. The snag which, more than any other, bust the Short Service System was that a large number of men used the Metropolitan Police short engagement as a stepping-stone to a long service job in other Forces. This was obviously unfair to the London ratepayer who ought not to be asked to pay for the three months' training of a recruit who immediately went elsewhere.

The Short Service System has gone, but no alternative remedy has yet been produced for the disease to which the system was applied. No one familiar with police work will deny the existence of the defect which Lord Trenchard hoped to remove—or rather to mitigate—by his plan of taking a certain number of men on a ten years' engagement.

The main object was to produce a younger and more active body of constables. At present more than half the constables in the Metropolitan Force have little inducement to do any more than is necessary to keep themselves out of trouble. They have allowed the chance of promotion to pass and the main idea in the minds of some of them is to qualify for pensions and then to leave the Force at the earliest possible moment.

The long service increments are no doubt intended to provide a slight incentive to the constable who does not obtain promotion, to exhibit zeal and energy, but the prospect of earning two half-crowns will not turn middle-aged men into young men or boredom into keenness.

It is not only a question of the absence of any incentive to activity. There is also a very definite urge to inactivity.

First of all there is the physical urge. It is more trouble to run than to walk; it is more trouble to walk than to stand still. It is much easier to see nothing and to hear nothing than to see and hear things which may lead to the writing of reports, the giving of evidence in Court and possibly to the making of mistakes. The line of inaction is the line of safety; activity and keenness can bring no reward and may conceivably jeopardize the sacred pension.

The "old hand" may be a very safe policeman. He is not likely to lose his head, his heart, or his temper. His shrewdness and experience are no doubt valuable, but this is not enough. The suppression of crime needs a Force that is not content to sit in its trenches and dug-outs. It must be capable of counter-attack and always on the alert to take the offensive on every possible opportunity.

Police work is peculiar as regards the extent to which its successful performance depends on individual keenness and ingenuity. In a factory and in an office, a man's work can be judged by output. He is under close and constant supervision. So also is the soldier, the sailor and the airman. Though the question of output does not arise with them, any slackness or failure to maintain a proper standard of efficiency is immediately noticed by officers and N.C.O.s.

Not so with the police. There is no fixed standard of efficiency; there is no touchstone by which zeal can be tested. Most of the work is done in isolation. Everything—or nearly everything—depends on the spirit that animates the individual man, and his will to work.

Lord Trenchard's system would have undoubtedly achieved what he had in mind, but the practical difficulties of working it were regarded as outweighing the advantages secured, and it was abandoned.

Far more important than the short service system, and the most fundamental of Lord Trenchard's reforms, was the Metropolitan Police College at Hendon. The position he found was that for a hundred years practically the only "way in" to the Metropolitan Force had been by joining as a constable and the only "way up" was by climbing the toilsome ladder rung by rung—section sergeant, station sergeant, inspector, sub-divisional inspector, chief inspector, superintendent, chief constable, deputy assistant commissioner, assistant commissioner, commissioner. Exception was made to this rule only when a quite senior post (commissioner, assistant commissioner, deputy assistant commissioner or chief constable) became vacant, and no suitable promoted constable was available. Then the appointment was filled from outside, usually by an army officer.

This curious state of affairs originated with Sir Robert Peel who, when he started the Force, was so anxious to protect himself—and it—from nepotism, that he made a rule that up to the rank of superintendent all posts should be filled by promotion from below. This was no doubt sensible enough in 1829 with a force totalling 1,011 men and no ranks above superintendent except the Commissioners themselves. (There were two at the start.) But in 1932, with a

force of nearly 20,000, enormously increased responsibilities and several higher posts above the superintendent rank, the plan of relying entirely on promoted constables was obviously questionable. It had in fact been questioned several times. The Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure, for example, which reported in 1929, said:

“We wish to emphasize that long experience and good service in the lower ranks of the Force are not the only, or even the most important, qualifications for the higher posts, which ought to be filled in all cases by men who, besides being themselves upright and fair-minded, are capable of impressing their own standards on their subordinates. We should therefore regard as inimical to the public interest any system which limited appointments to the higher posts to those who had entered the police as constables and we are of opinion that such posts should be filled by the best men available, irrespective of the source whence they are drawn.”

There were many—and there are still some—who defended the old system. Would they, I wonder, approve if the same plan were applied to the Fighting Services; if, for example, the Army relied entirely on private soldiers, promoted through the ranks of lance-corporal, corporal, sergeant, sergeant-major, 2nd lieutenant, etc. etc., for *all* officers up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, with no O.C.T.U. or other device for giving early advancement for born leaders? On the same principle, if there were not enough promoted private soldiers to produce the necessary quota of Generals and Field-Marsals, the Army would presumably import some sailors, lawyers or perhaps policemen!

The mere fact that the police system had failed for years to produce its own “tops” might seem to be in itself sufficient indication that something was wrong. What other profession or calling has to import outsiders to fill its most responsible posts? Again, what other profession or calling relies entirely on one stratum of society for its recruitment? The entrants to the Armed Forces, the Civil Service, medicine, law, church, teaching and business come from all educational levels. The door is open to honours degree men from the universities as well as to elementary schoolboys. Theoretically, of course, there is nothing to prevent a senior wrangler from joining as a

constable provided he has the right height, chest measurement and general physique, but the knowledge that he will have to walk the streets for about eight years before even becoming a sergeant and that there is no chance of achieving a position in which he can use the brains God has given him for perhaps twenty years, is obviously enough to deter any man whose educational attainments give him a field of choice.

This then was the position which Lord Trenchard found and it did not take him long to realize that something ought to be done about it. Within three years of his being appointed Commissioner, the College was opened. This may not sound a very remarkable achievement, but when one considers the amount of work that is necessary before such a plan can become an accomplished fact, when one remembers that he was engaged in several other major reforms at the same time, when one recalls the amount of opposition that had to be encountered and the number of people who had to be infected with some of his own enthusiasm, even the most bigoted opponent must admit that it was good going. First, the scheme itself had to be drawn up and this involved a number of difficult decisions. Should it be national or only Metropolitan, from what sources should candidates be accepted and at what ages, how many could be taken at a time and subsequently absorbed, what type of training should be given and for how long? These were only few of a hundred questions which had to be decided before the plan could be put on paper. Fortunately paper was cheap and plentiful in those days. The number of acres covered by 1st draft, 2nd draft, 3rd draft, annual report, Cabinet paper, White Paper and miscellaneous memoranda and correspondence hardly bears thinking about in these restricted days.

Having prepared his scheme, the next thing was to make people believe in it. The small group at Scotland Yard who worked on it with him needed no conversion. They were in it up to the neck from the start. They felt that they were at last doing a job worth doing. They thanked God for having sent them a man who could see woods and not only trees, who was stimulated rather than cowed by opposition, who saw his objectives clearly and went straight for them, and who had at the same time the patience to deal gently and tactfully with busy men in high places whose co-operation was essential for success.

"Manuring the ground" was what he called this process of winning supporters. It began with the Home Secretary and his

advisers, then the Cabinet, and lastly the three P's, Parliament, Press and Public.

The publication of the Commissioner's Annual Report for 1932, early in May 1933, was the first intimation to the public that interesting things were happening at Scotland Yard. Up to that time elaborate precautions had been taken to prevent any leakage of information and, although work on the schemes had been going on for a year or more, Fleet Street had remained in the dark.

Talking of secrecy and leakage impels me to pay a tribute to the strength of the "weaker sex" in this respect. In my experience they are markedly more dependable than men in avoiding "careless talk". Whether it is that men are more prone to "shoot a line" as the R.A.F. say, I don't know, but I should always be more happy to entrust hush-hush matters to a woman than to a man. I remember Lord Trenchard saying once that the best form of quick publicity was to "tell it in confidence to a Cabinet Minister". He had in mind no doubt a particular Cabinet Minister in office at that time whose reputation was that he dined out on state secrets.

The Annual Report did not actually announce the College scheme but the following passage gave a fairly broad hint of what Lord Trenchard had in mind:

"Whatever may be the case as regards other police forces (none of which compare in size with the Metropolitan Police or present quite the same problems), it is essential, in my opinion, to devise for this Force a scheme which both opens up a clear avenue of fairly rapid promotion for outstanding men who join as constables, and also provide for the direct recruitment into the officer posts of men who have acquired good educational qualifications before appointment and are selected as suitable in respect of personality and physique. Hitherto Scotland Yard has drawn on the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Civil Service, the Legal profession, and Overseas Police forces to fill the responsible posts at Headquarters. Of the present Assistant Commissioners and Deputy Assistant Commissioners two were originally soldiers, two lawyers, one came from the Indian Police, one from the Egyptian Police, and one was a member of the Civil staff at Scotland Yard.

"A number of Chief Constableships both at Headquarters and in the Districts have been, and are, held with distinction by men

promoted from the Force itself. In one instance in the past an Assistant Commissionership was so held. This should occur more frequently. There is no sort of bar to such appointments, and the highest posts are open to those who possess the necessary qualifications. The simple fact is that a system under which all recruitment is to the rank of constable does not produce a sufficiency of such men to meet the demands of an organization so large and complex as the Metropolitan Force."

The publication of this report was followed almost at once by the issue of a White Paper in which the College, the Short Service scheme and certain other reforms were announced. Legislation was necessary and a Bill was laid before the House of Commons twelve days later.

Even for Lord Trenchard the pace at that period was hot. Within the month of May, 1933, the Annual Report and the White Paper appeared, the Bill was introduced and two long debates took place in the House of Commons.

It was one of my duties to sit through these debates as well as those in the House of Lords. I was struck by two things. One was that the speeches in the Lords reached a much higher standard of quality than those in the Commons, and the other was that so many speakers in the Commons should have thought it necessary to occupy hours of time and pages of Hansard chasing non-existent hares, raising imaginary bogeys and attributing base motives where no one could honestly believe that such motives existed. These impressions, derived at the time from hearing and reading the debates, are fully confirmed by a recent re-perusal of them.

It may be an essential feature of the party system that Oppositions should oppose with little apparent regard to honesty or national interests, but when this principle is carried to such lengths, it is not perhaps surprising if our elected representatives sometimes fail to secure from the man in the street quite as much respect as they might.

I once heard a bus conductor raise a good laugh from a tired early morning cargo of human wage-slaves by announcing their arrival at the stop between Westminster Station and the Houses of Parliament thus: "Ere we are again, ladies and gents. On our left the underground railway and on our right, above ground, the Westminster gas works."

Which reminds me (with apologies for yet another digression)

London bus conductors are a remarkable race. I have occasionally heard one give a sharp answer or a rebuke to a particularly unreasonable or rude passenger, but the way they keep their tempers as a rule in most trying circumstances and even lay themselves out to cheer people up deserves high praise. There never was a truer saying than that the "soft answer turneth away wrath". At the time when London transport was partially disorganized by the bombing and long queues waited at every bus stop, tempers got a little frayed if a conductor refused to take any more passengers. But it was not the refusal so much as the manner of refusal that mattered. One, I heard on such an occasion, shouted, "No more," pushing his arm out in the faces of the jostling crowd. He left an indignation meeting behind him. The next one said: "Sorry, ladies, I can't take you. 'Ouse full. Next performance six-thirty." He produced a laugh and grumbling died away.

Returning to the House of Commons and the Metropolitan Police Bill, the main lines of objection were (1) that the police were being militarized; (2) that an "officer class" was being introduced which would be out of touch and sympathy with the ordinary honest constables; (3) that the Government was embarking on a sinister plan to divide the Force in two so as to make it in some mysterious way more amenable to evil Tory designs in the event of industrial trouble.

Seldom has so much wrong-headed nonsense been talked on a serious subject. Lord Trenchard's simple motive was to raise the standard of efficiency of the Metropolitan Police, to open the entrance door to all the best products of our educational system and to put an end to the absurdity of a profession which could not produce its own supreme command.

It is true also, no doubt, though even he hardly dared to mention it in any public way, that he hoped to raise the general moral tone, the "esprit de corps", and to reduce to a minimum the lapses from professional virtue which, he felt, were commoner than they should be.

Amongst the qualities which contribute to the make up of a good senior police officer, high principles and integrity must obviously take first place. It would, in fact, be no exaggeration to say that, without them, other qualities, however highly developed, are valueless. A high standard of conduct is largely a matter of education and one of the best means of developing or reinforcing it in police officers is to subject them to a prolonged period of training at an age when their minds are still malleable and may be expected to respond to outside

influences. This is one of the arguments for a College scheme on the lines of that started by Lord Trenchard.

Corruption is one of the subjects that people are shy of talking about. Why one should be mealy-mouthed about it I have never understood. There never has been, and there never will be, such a thing as a one hundred per cent incorrupt police force. So long as human nature remains human nature, if thousands of people are subjected to a certain type of temptation, a number of them will succumb. If human nature ever reaches such a high level that this proposition ceases to be true, there will no longer be any need for police at all, except perhaps to control the angelic traffic.

A policeman's duty compels him to do things which are distasteful to members of the community. He has to arrest criminals and the criminals don't like it; he has to report traffic offenders for summonses and the offenders don't like it; he has to raid clubs and gambling houses and the proprietors don't like it. A percentage of these inconvenienced persons are prepared to pay for immunity and they are sometimes able to find a police officer who is willing to be squared. The temptation is great and nobody but a fool would suppose that it is always successfully resisted. In some countries the bribing of police officers is common form. In this country it is uncommon and the person who tries it on takes a big risk unless he knows his man. People are very ready to make vague general accusations against the police, but these accusations, when analysed, usually boil down to second or third-hand stories or generalizations based on an isolated instance. The extent of corruption in a particular Force at a particular time cannot be demonstrated statistically because only the proved cases are recorded, but the number of such proved cases, even in a large Force like the Metropolitan, is not high enough to give rise to any serious anxiety.

However, as I say, cases of corruption will always turn up from time to time and it is the business of those in control of police to face the facts and do everything in their power to combat the evil.

Broadly speaking, there are three things that can be done. The first is to investigate with scrupulous thoroughness any allegations made. The second is to deal ruthlessly with officers found guilty, and the third is to do everything possible to ensure that those promoted to positions of authority are themselves men of the highest character who make no compromises with honesty and are likely to infect their men with their own high standard.

The investigation of allegations and the punishment of offenders is within the power of every Chief of Police, but the insurance of high character in holders of senior positions is not so easy. There is not a great deal he can do about it. Promotion is based mainly on assessable qualities, and high character is generally assumed unless there is evidence to the contrary. In these circumstances a residential College, if run on the best lines, has great potential value. "Integrity" naturally does not appear as an item in the curriculum but if the staff succeed in setting and maintaining a high tone, not only in their lectures but also in the recreational and general life of the College, the young policeman can hardly fail to benefit. For eighteen months or two years he lives in an atmosphere of competitive striving towards a professional ideal. This ideal forms itself gradually in his mind during his course of training. He finds that to attain or approximate to perfection he must not only acquire a large amount of knowledge and skill, but he must also develop qualities of character such as perseverance, resourcefulness and leadership. Integrity will very possibly not appear at all in his mental list simply because his ideal without it would be unthinkable and absurd. It goes without saying. It is patently the foundation stone of the whole structure. Any questioning of it would be as insulting as a charge of cowardice. The permeation of the Forces with men who have passed through these mental processes is as the "little leaven which leaveneth the whole lump."

I am well aware that the devotion of so much space to this aspect of the College idea may seem to some police officers regrettable and out of proportion. Perhaps it is a case of "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." Be that as it may, I believe that the importance of the point is apt to be lost sight of simply because of this queer reluctance to discuss it openly. Where there is an evil, even though a small one, it is surely better to expose it and exhibit its true proportions, rather than to conceal it and give the impression of a sinister skeleton in the cupboard.

The attitude of the Press to Lord Trenchard's reforms was on the whole very favourable. Some of the left wing papers tried to raise the class issue. A sort of inverted snobbery saw in the College plan a dangerous anti-democratic plot and all sorts of disasters were predicted.

The opinion of the Force itself was hard to assess. The vocal part of it, that is to say the Federation, did not like the College and they have gone on disliking it ever since. How far they represent the true

feelings of the majority is questionable. In the police, as in other bodies of men, the articulate portion does not always succeed in reflecting accurately what the inarticulate mass of their comrades are thinking, though I'm sure they do their best to paint a true picture. The main and most persistent grievance was that the College scheme, by bringing in a certain number of direct entrants into the Inspector grade, reduced the chances of further promotion for those who were not selected for the College and had secured advancement to the Station Sergeant rank in the ordinary way. In stating this point, the men's representatives almost always failed to remember that the number of higher posts was greatly increased by Lord Trenchard with the express purpose of compensating for this feature and that two-thirds of the entrants to the College were taken from the ranks of the Force itself and only one-third from outside.

Lord Trenchard believed that by bringing together in one residential educational establishment young men of different origins, different upbringing, different outlook and different background, the intercourse and competitive spirit of the lecture hall, of the playing fields and of the mess would bring out the best in all of them, broaden their knowledge of life and produce a type of officer who would be not merely technically skilful and efficient, but also a broad-minded and high-principled human being, capable of becoming a "leader" in the fullest sense of the word.

To achieve this, the plan provided for three different types of entry. Nearly two-thirds of the vacancies were reserved for men in the Force already. The remainder were allotted partly to those successful in a competitive examination similar to the entrance examination for Sandhurst and partly to men, chosen by selection, who were University graduates or had reached a similar educational standard.

The age limits for the entrants from the Force were wide at the start so as to give the largest possible number an opportunity of applying. Educational attainments were not over-stressed. Provided a candidate was young enough, and appeared to have brains enough, to respond to further education, he had a chance of being selected. The object was to find men of character and keenness with the qualities of potential senior officers. The competition was keen and a lot of first-class men came forward. Many of them, but for this opportunity of accelerated advancement, would either have plodded along in the hope of securing eventual promotion in the old slow way, or, more probably, would have got fed up with the whole

business and taken to some other occupation. Thus many excellent men would certainly have been lost to the service.

In the competitive examination an interview was included and a high proportion of marks was allotted to it. This was clearly wise as a man might be a first-class scholar without having the makings of a good senior police officer.

Judging by results the selection machine seems to have done a good job. One criticism of it was that it put too much emphasis on athletic achievements and skill at games. That is an arguable point. My own view, for what it is worth, is that although the "ball-eye", without which skill at cricket, tennis, squash, hockey and other similar games is impossible (don't I know it? I haven't got one) is a matter of luck and heredity, the man who has achieved real success in these or any other games, or in athletics, who has captained teams, whether at school, at university or in clubs, is likely to possess qualities that are of value. Up to a point he has shown pluck, tenacity, capacity for leadership and the will to excel. From leading teams in the field he has unconsciously learned something of the meaning of "team spirit" and of the subtle art of managing men and securing their loyalty and respect. Also, of course, an aptitude for, and knowledge of, sport and games has practical value in itself, as the good senior officer is expected to take an interest in this side of the policeman's life. If he has skill as well as keenness, his advice and guidance in the management of such activities will be the more welcomed and appreciated by his men.

The first two courses at the College were fifteen months, but this was extended later to two years. The syllabus was wide and included not only the obvious subjects such as criminal law, police duties and procedure, the scientific investigation of crime, physical training and so forth, but also a variety of topics of more general interest. Dealing with this point in one of his Annual Reports, the Commissioner said:

"It is obviously desirable that those under instruction at the college should have a clear picture of the whole system of justice, punishment and reform and it has been of the greatest assistance to have lectures from experts on prisons, the Borstal system, juvenile courts, coroners' courts and many other subjects outside the strict limits of police duties."

Police history was also studied. This most fascinating subject, in which there is still plenty of room for original research, might

with advantage be given greater prominence in the training of constables as well as senior officers. The value of tradition has long been appreciated in the Armed Forces. The soldier takes a great pride in the history and achievements of his regiment, and those responsible for the training of recruits take trouble to foster and develop this pride. It gives the man a satisfactory feeling of being one of a justly famous company, it provides him with a high standard of conduct to live up to and it makes him keen to have his name added to the list of those who have contributed to the fine history of his unit.

The Police Service has no battle honours and its colours do not decorate our cathedrals, but the individual and collective achievements of its members have made an incalculable contribution to social development and security.

This contribution has necessarily been less spectacular than that of the Armed Forces. The police's best services to the community have not consisted of doughty deeds of valour (though there have been plenty such) but of the exact reverse—the undramatic achievements of patience, tolerance and moderation. Their victories are gained not by killing and wounding, but by self-control, calmness in emergency and the force of example.

When an ugly crowd, bent on mischief, is persuaded to dissolve itself quietly, when a panic is allayed or a clash of factions averted through tactful police handling, it is as much a victory as the bombing of an enemy town or the assault of a position, and the fewer the casualties the greater the victory. There are no citations in the *London Gazette* and no medals awarded, but discipline, skill and sometimes courage are required for the social victory as for the military operation.

It is good that the young man entering a Police Force should learn of the state of affairs in England before the modern system of policing was invented, of the trials and tribulations of the early days, of the wisdom and patience of those who directed the uncertain steps of the Force in its infancy, of its slow and painful emergence from public execration to general approval. To belong to a service which has made its mark on social history and which has secured the envy and admiration of the world is something to be proud of.

The popularity of "thrillers" has focussed public attention perhaps overmuch on the crime detection aspects of police work. The solution of murder mysteries is of course an important feature of police activity. But many countries have produced super-detectives, whereas few, if

any, have solved the problem of the right method of law enforcement as fully and satisfactorily as we have in this country.

To return to the College. The building and grounds acquired by Lord Trenchard at Hendon were remarkably well suited for the purpose. Originally designed as a country club, the buildings had been converted into a factory. Ready-made garments are seldom perfect, but this one, after a certain amount of adaptation, proved to be a very good fit. It provided accommodation for a large lecture hall, classrooms, lounge, dining-hall, swimming-bath, library, gymnasium, squash courts and bedrooms. The grounds were ample for outdoor games and some buildings not required for the College gave sufficient space for the Driving School and the Metropolitan Police Laboratory (which is being removed to Scotland Yard itself, where it should clearly be, in close contact with the headquarters of the Criminal Investigation Department).

One of the snags encountered was the high *per capita* cost. This was due to the necessarily small student population. The College was Metropolitan only and the overhead expenses, which were heavy, when divided by about sixty to seventy, looked rather formidable. This point was naturally picked on by the critics. Broadly there were two answers. The first was that the value to the country of high-grade police officers destined to occupy the highest posts in the Forces of the country cannot be assessed in hard cash. They were a good investment at almost any price. The second answer was that the high cost was temporary. When Provincial, Dominion and Colonial Forces realized the value of the training obtainable at Hendon, they would want to send some of their young men, the population would increase and the *per capita* cost would come down.

It may be asked, and *was* asked, why Lord Trenchard did not plan his college on a national basis at the start. The reason was that he would never have got started at all if he had waited for agreement by all the Local Authorities and Chief Constables in England and Wales. There had been a scheme for a national college a few years previously—generally known as the Dixon scheme. It had “fallen down” for two main reasons. The Metropolitan Commissioner of the day (Lord Byng) didn’t like it (and was supported in this by most of his senior officers) because a minimum of five years’ service as a constable was required before an officer was eligible as a candidate for the proposed college. There was no provision for direct entries from outside and it was felt that the best results would not be obtained

under these restrictions. The average age of the students would be too high, and ambitious young men with good educations would not be tempted to join as constables if their only hope of getting to the college would not even begin to materialize until they had served as constables for five years. Before making his own plan, Lord Trenchard had carefully reconsidered the Dixon scheme and had rejected it on the same grounds as had been advanced by Lord Byng.

However, the Dixon scheme might still have been accepted in spite of the Metropolitan objections, but for the attitude adopted by Local Authorities. After giving it a cordial reception when it was first put forward, they later got scared by the cost and raised so many difficulties and objections that the scheme was shelved.

It is not perhaps very surprising therefore that Lord Trenchard (who described himself once as an "old man in a hurry") decided that it was a case of a Metropolitan College or nothing, and having reached that decision, went full steam ahead for his objective.

It was unfortunate that provincial Forces took some time to reconcile themselves to the college scheme. From their point of view there were very real difficulties. They were apprehensive about the unsettling effect on their Forces of accelerated promotion for selected officers. Their branch boards were antagonistic. Representative bodies are always suspicious of any special advancement. Long periods of apprenticeship in the "ranks" is to them the only sound way of qualifying for promotion. The expense was also a difficulty. Watch Committees and Standing Joint Committees did not see the fun of paying a large sum for the training of one or two young officers when they could have no guarantee that the men so trained would stay. Many of them would probably start applying quite soon for vacant Chief Constableships elsewhere and some other Force would get the benefit of expenditure not incurred by themselves.

It was not until just before the war that provincial Forces began to show signs of wanting to send men to the College (though a number of students had been sent by the Colonial Office). Certain modifications were made to meet their requirements and a small number were coming to the term starting in the autumn of 1939. But the outbreak of war put the lid on the College itself and, at the moment of writing, no decision has been reached as to the form of the future scheme.

It will be a tragedy indeed if those who are scared by the difficulties and fail to appreciate the great value to the future of all British Police Forces, of the original conceptions, are allowed to have their way and

let the College become merely a place where courses in police work are held from time to time. The attraction of the line of least resistance is often great, particularly for tired men with too much to do and too little vision. But when an important, carefully thought-out step forward has been taken, it would be a grievous business if a retreat were ordered on grounds which would seem to amount to little more than temporary expediency.

History has shown to what a large extent the social well-being of a country depends on the high quality of its police. The college plan produced unquestionably a great fundamental improvement in the method of evolving the right sort of senior police officers. It remedied defects which had been evident for a long time. It was accepted by Parliament and acclaimed by the most important newspapers in the country. Those who had most to do with its inception still strongly advocate the retention of its main principles in any future plan (though minor changes may be necessary) and it is much to be hoped that the authorities who have to make the decision will not pay too much heed to the dismal tale of difficulties which opponents are able to put forward.

It would be interesting to hear the views of some of the College "output". Those who have themselves undergone the treatment should be fair judges of its efficacy. The Chief Constables of Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Northumberland, Durham County, Birmingham, Cambridge and Plymouth should have opinions worth listening to. They were all students at the College only a few years ago. The Head of the Ceylon Police is another. These men have secured their positions on their merits. But for their period at the College and the start it gave them, it is safe to say that not one of them would have obtained the responsible posts they are now holding. It is equally safe to say that the Service, taken as a whole, would have been the poorer if it had possessed no means of giving men of such proved quality a chance of getting out of the ruck and doing a worthwhile job of work whilst still young enough to bring freshness, energy and new ideas to bear. I have said "proved quality" and it is a fact that quality needs to be proved before the Chief Constablenesship of a county or a big borough is secured. The competition is keen and for a youngish man to get even as far as the "short list" is an achievement. It isn't enough for a candidate to be a Hendon product. That would not in itself cut much ice with a Watch Committee or a Standing Joint Committee. He must be able to demonstrate that after leaving he

made good use of the training he had received and of the opportunity it gave him of showing what he was made of. The point is that but for the principle introduced by Lord Trenchard of taking young men, moulding them whilst still plastic and giving them a bit of a start if found worthy of it, those now holding the posts mentioned would probably not be in the Service at all or, if still in, would be holding quite subordinate posts.

I have mentioned only those of the college students whom I happen to know about as having already reached high positions in the Police Service. Many others are less advanced on a similar journey and others again have attained distinction in the Armed Forces, in the Allied Control Commission and elsewhere. In a variety of ways England has benefited by giving these young men a chance whilst still young.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," says the Sermon on the Mount. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

If it could be shown that the Trenchard plan did not bring forth good fruit, then by all means let it be cast into the fire. The suggestion is that such a showing is impossible.

Now is the time. If the resurrected college starts wrong, it will take years to put it right. Young men are coming out of the Armed Forces, accustomed to a life of action and to taking responsibilities and anxious to do a man's job. The police badly needs new recruits. It is many thousands below strength. Is it going to be content to take only those who are prepared to enter a service offering no hope of advancement to the ambitious man, however brilliant, except by the long and painful process of mounting the ladder rung by rung with a minimum number of years on each rung?

If that is the best that can be offered, hundreds of valuable men will say: "Thank you, you can do what you like with a job like that. I prefer a profession—or a country—where merit has a hope before it grows a long white beard. You admit that the old have made a pretty bad muck of the world. You pretend to want the young to have a try and see if they can do better. And yet here is a profession under Government control, one specially suitable for young men, and you refuse us any hope of running anything because old men stick to the out-dated theory that long experience is the only qualification for responsibility."

It would need too much space and paper to deal with the rest of

Lord Trenchard's reforms. They were—and still are—all of importance to the well-being and efficiency of the Metropolitan Police, but not now perhaps of sufficient public interest to justify a detailed record here.

The bigness of Lord Trenchard's outlook was well indicated by his building programme, which was interrupted—as so many good things were—by the outbreak of war. When discussing these plans with architects and designers he used always to insist that the objective should be the requirements of 1980 rather than those of 1935. That an unmarried constable should be given accommodation comparable with that of a good class modern hotel was something of a shock for the old-timers. It was a big jump from dismal, ill-lighted, unheated cubicles to well-fitted, nicely furnished individual bedrooms with hot and cold water basins. Some people still joke about the magnificence of the modern "Section Houses", but there will be no strangeness about them in forty or fifty years' time and future generations of policemen will rise to be grateful for Lord Trenchard's refusal to listen to short-sighted views.

Another memorial to his period of control which should outlast controversy and cause thousands of future policemen and their families to bless his name is the provision he made for games and recreation. Each of the four Districts now has a well-appointed Sports Ground and Club House, and financial arrangements have been made which should ensure their maintenance and any further developments which may be desired.

Yet one more permanent memorial to Lord Trenchard (which should properly have been named after him) is the northern extension or "Scotland Yard North" as we call it officially. Its fair white face looks out across the river at the County Hall. It brings the number of the main headquarter buildings of Scotland Yard to three, but is entirely out of sympathy architecturally with the other two. The reason for this is that it is part of phase 2 of a big Government building plan, phase 1 of which has not yet shown above ground level.

The pre-war idea was first to erect a great new Government office on the vacant site behind the Banqueting Hall, where Whitehall Palace used to be. That was to take ten years or so and then gradual development northwards, i.e. towards the Houses of Parliament, would follow later as phase 2. But the best laid plans of mice and men gang aft agley when dictators get out of control, and the outbreak of war found phase 1 at the foundation stage, whereas we had

achieved an almost complete building on the north-east corner of the space in front (i.e. on the Embankment side) of the phase 2 area.

It took eight years to get the various authorities concerned to agree to our building. When I arrived at the Yard in 1927 I found a frightful state of congestion. In the search for a possible outlet I looked out of a north-facing window one day and saw a temporary 1914-18 bungalow occupying a space between Montagu House and the river. It was occupied by the Ministry of Labour. When I suggested that this was obviously where we ought to build, I was told that it could not be done. There was a sacred building line. The bungalow would go soon and the idea of erecting a permanent building on the site was out of the question. Parliament had declared against it and I should meet opposition from the London County Council, the Westminster City Council, the Office of Works, the Crown Lands Commission, the Paving Commission and perhaps a few other interested bodies. However, there's "no harm in asking". Investigation revealed that the parliamentary pronouncement was by no means clear and there was at least an outside chance that the other parties might be persuaded to see our point of view. So I began writing letters to people. The years slipped by with no progress made and when Lord Trenchard came I was about as near my objective as I had been at the start. When I put the matter to him he said he would consider it when he had time—or something like that. Another year passed and I put a minute on the file: "Commissioner. I brought this matter to your notice twelve months ago. Nothing has happened." That did it. After questioning the propriety of my minute, which might be read as an accusation of neglectfulness on his part (I think his tongue was in his cheek on this), he became interested and violently active. A tea party was arranged. All the interests concerned were invited. They were shown big policemen sitting in one another's laps in dark congested rooms, bits of corridor used as offices and pallid typists balancing their machines on one another's backs (more or less). They were taken to the window to inspect the Naboth's vineyard below. Their feeble objections were boomed into silence and the thing was settled, "in principle", as we say. A lot remained still to be done. The Fine Arts people had to be consulted for one thing. Their recommendation was that the architectural style should be in sympathy with the still unstarted new government building on the Whitehall Palace site and that no attempt should be made to harmonize with Norman Shaw's fortress-like erection. An

outside architect (Mr. Curtis Green) was called in to prepare the elevation and the rest of the job was entrusted to the Office of Works.

There were further delays and the result was that the building was still going on when the war broke out. We decided to carry on, but by the time it was ready for occupation, steel and concrete buildings near the centre of things had become as much an essential of the war effort as guns and aeroplanes after Dunkirk. (Hence "Lenin's Tomb" between Horse Guards Parade and the Mall.) It is difficult to hide a large white building on the Embankment and we were soon attacked. "Combined Operations" had nowhere to lay their heads—and plans. Lord Louis Mountbatten came and did his charm-stuff. Resistance was out of the question. Sir Philip Game gave in without firing a shot. When I came on the scene it was only a question of how much and how soon. The spell was so powerful that one could only be thankful that he did not ask for the clothes we stood up in—and our coupons. He would have got them. First one floor, then two, then four, then five, and we only secured full possession of our house at the end of 1945. They were delightful neighbours and relations were cordial throughout. Incidentally I had the privilege of witnessing Lord Louis in action also when a department (which shall be nameless) was being, as he thought, obstructive. It was a good sight. His guns were as irresistible as his smiles.

CHAPTER IV

SIR PHILIP GAME

LORD TRENCHARD resigned in 1935. He felt that he had finished what he set out to do. If he stayed any longer he might, as he put it himself, get into mischief.

The master boat-builder is not necessarily a good oarsman and Lord Trenchard was anyway not interested in rowing.

He was succeeded by Air Vice-Marshal Sir Philip Game who, after leaving the Royal Air Force, had been Governor-General of New South Wales.

Sir Philip had performed for Lord Trenchard at the Air Ministry the same sort of job that I did for him at Scotland Yard—the same, that is, to the extent that we both included amongst our duties the task of translating Lord Trenchard into official language.

As I have shown already in the previous chapter, Lord Trenchard needed in his team of collaborators one or more persons who could absorb and believe in his ideas and render them into the right form for reports, memoranda, official letters and other such documents.

Sir Philip Game who, as I say, had performed this function for Lord Trenchard for a time at the Air Ministry, was, it follows, a practised draftsman. He hated and eschewed official jargon and his Annual Reports were good examples of simple, straightforward and clear utterance.

His Commissionership, though a period of consolidation rather than reform, was not without incident. It included one royal funeral, one coronation, the Communist-Fascist disturbances in the East End, and one war.

The funeral of King George V was very nearly a disaster. For a number of reasons, royal funerals put a greater strain on the police than any other form of ceremonial occasion. In the first place, the time for preparation is short—about a week or ten days as against many months in the case of most of the other big affairs. Secondly,

there are no rival attractions elsewhere. With coronations, jubilees and such, every town and village has its own private celebration, and local patriotism keeps many people in the places where they live. But when a monarch dies, there is only one funeral procession and people will go to great lengths—both in expense and inconvenience—to be present at it. A desire to pay personal respect to a great ruler is no doubt the motive with the vast majority. Particularly is this so when the ruler who has passed is as universally beloved as was King George V. Some also may be attracted by what is unquestionably a highly emotional and, in a queer way, satisfying spectacle. Incidentally, all the greatest in the land are visible on these occasions and the slow pace of the procession gives the spectators—or at least the front few rows of them—a good opportunity of seeing them.

The result of all this is that enormous crowds concentrate on a not very long route (there is a limit to the distance that the old and frail can reasonably be asked to walk) and there is a risk of things getting out of control at certain difficult points.

It was much the same at the funeral of Edward VII. I was a trooper in the Yeomanry in those days and my regiment was lining the route in the neighbourhood of the Marble Arch.

A great mass of people selected the Edgware Road as a way of approach to the route and the sheer weight of the ever-increasing crowd pressed the troops and police further and further forward until there was a real risk of the route becoming blocked. Fortunately the lining troops were in two ranks and it was possible to remove the front rank from sections where there was no abnormal pressure and use them to reinforce the hard-pressed ranks north of the Marble Arch. This process was continued until no less than eight ranks of military had been accumulated, with police in front of them. Although each rank linked arms and lay back on the crowd, still we felt ourselves being pushed forward every now and then. All our hardly-learned drill—"Rest on your arms reversed," etc. etc.—went west, as we should soon have been unbalanced if we had tried to stand at attention.

It was a hot day and the pressure inside the crowd must have been enormous. Every few minutes there would be a shout from behind us, "Woman fainted, open the ranks please," and the ambulance men were kept busy collecting the casualties and taking them across to a tent in the Park.

Just before the head of the procession arrived, I remember, the

shout came again from just behind me, "Little girl fainted. Open the ranks please." We made a gap and a small red-faced child of about ten or twelve was passed out. She looked a bit compressed but otherwise all right. "Well now," said the nearest policeman, "and what's the matter with you?" "Nothink, sir, but I couldn't see." No one had the heart to put her back where she came from and she was allowed to stand all by herself in front of everyone.

The difficulties at King George V's funeral were almost exactly the same—and in the same places—as those at King Edward VII's. So much so that *The Times* account of the earlier occasion could equally well have been written for the later one.

After most of these affairs Scotland Yard receives a number of complaints from people who think that things might have been better managed. They've got involved in a crowd or they've failed to reach their seats, or something similar. One of the nicest was from a man who complained bitterly after the funeral that he and his wife had been allowed by the police to enter Piccadilly from a side turning when it was already so full that it should have been closed. Things had become so bad, it seemed, that his wife had been injured and taken to a hospital. "But that," he said, "is not what I am complaining about. I lost a woolly which I was carrying and I consider that I am entitled to compensation."

Another good one was from a man who said pathetically that he was six feet ten inches high and was getting sick of being told by the police to "get off that box." (There is a rule against standing on boxes because they are a danger if the crowd begins to move. People are liable to fall over them.) Would we, he asked, inform the Metropolitan Police about his rather abnormal length so that he might be spared these embarrassing requests?

The principal new feature in the Coronation arrangements was the installation of a large number of barriers. Sockets were inserted in roads and pavements at points where crowd pressure might be likely to become excessive and the barriers were put into them before people began to assemble. When it was all over they were taken away and stored for future use. The experiment is regarded as having justified itself.

One of Sir Philip Game's attributes which stood him in good stead at these times, and still more during the war, was his complete imperturbability. Nothing could disturb his equanimity. In fact the more hectic things became, the calmer he was. I remember saying

to him once at the height of the 1940-41 air raids: "If things get much worse, I believe you will go right off to sleep."

Another characteristic of Sir Philip Game, highly desirable in a Commissioner of Police, was a profound dislike of anything approaching oppressiveness or callousness. Nothing roused his wrath so easily as the application of rules or regulations in a harsh or unsympathetic manner. Officials who have to deal with hundreds of "cases" of a similar kind are naturally liable, without necessarily being very brutal people, to treat them rather as "cases" than as individual human problems. This is no doubt one of the reasons why Civil Servants are apt to incur criticism. They are not by nature any less human than other people. On the contrary my experience is that they are normally fair and reasonable and very anxious not to act oppressively. They get little credit for the many thousands of cases in which their actions are considerate and helpful. But an individual instance of what is—or appears to be—harsh is liable to be brought under the limelight and often grossly exaggerated. People who are so eager to criticize the "bureaucrat" (sometimes without knowledge of the full facts) might well bear in mind that Civil Servants—unlike business men—have to be prepared to justify their every action to Parliament. Members are just as ready to question any departure from their laws and regulations as to scarify an unfortunate who interprets them too strictly.

However, this sort of argument did not appeal very strongly to Sir Philip Game, and it was sometimes hard work to convince him that (as was so often the case) it was the rule itself rather than the interpretation of it that produced the grievance.

He always had a tenderness for the under-dog or the person in trouble and he would take endless pains to find a way round when a "correct" decision produced an individual hardship.

The keynote of his war organization was decentralization. Even in the worst of the air raids, communications never actually broke down as completely as it was expected that they might, and contact between Scotland Yard and the Stations, though subjected to short local interruptions, remained pretty good throughout. But the policy of decentralizing to Districts, Divisions and Sub-Divisions was nevertheless fully justified. The officers in charge of these areas were left a large amount of discretion in handling the situation that arose. The directions they received were on general lines and interference from "above" was reduced to the minimum.

Looking back on those trying times it is indeed remarkable how smoothly the machine ran in spite of the numerous and disturbing spanners dropped into it from the skies. But if the police were "wonderful", the people themselves were no less so.

It was one of my jobs to examine the recommendations for gallantry awards—George Medals, British Empire Medals and commendations. It was not an easy task. The impression made by the written description of an incident depends so much on the eloquence and skill of the reporting officers. It was essential to keep the standard high and every action had to be carefully analysed to determine the extent to which the officer involved had risked death or injury in what he did.

That the Metropolitan standard was about right was indicated by the fact that the bulk of our recommendations were accepted by the committee which examined them for the whole country. A few were raised a point (e.g. a medal awarded when only a commendation had been suggested) or vice versa, but only in one or two instances was a recommendation completely turned down. The bulk of the cases consisted of perilous rescues of imprisoned victims. These often involved long, arduous tunnelling in half-demolished buildings, perhaps under toppling walls which might fall on the rescuers at any time. Fires, gas escapes, burst water-pipes, foul air and darkness sometimes added to the difficulty and danger. For gallantry in air raids the Metropolitan Police received 81 George Medals, 69 British Empire Medals and 114 commendations. The sad thought is that there must have been hundreds of other actions equally worthy which did not happen to be observed and reported. But that is one of the inevitable features of awards of this kind.

Like most other people who remained in London during the air raids, Sir Philip Game experienced a number of "near misses". As the junior ranks of the Force were necessarily involved, through the nature of their normal duties, in continuous exposure to danger, a good many senior officers felt that it was up to them to share in these dangers to some extent. There was nothing to prevent them—especially those stationed at headquarters—from remaining in reasonably safe places when things were bad and reserving necessary visits for quieter periods. They could even justify such a procedure on the ground that local officers could cope with their own troubles perfectly well without the intrusion (which might even be embarrassing) of "high-ups", and that the taking of avoidable risks was a wrong thing

to do as a live and uninjured police officer is of more value than a dead or damaged one.

However, as might be expected, this sort of argument did not cut much ice with the majority of senior police officers, who realized that the moral effect of their presence in the "front line" was of real value and that the men on the job derived comfort and encouragement from the knowledge that their bosses appreciated, from personal experience, the sort of conditions with which they had to cope. Though senior officers might seldom have to interfere with the conduct of operations, their mere presence and the speaking of the right word at the right time, might easily make all the difference between a sense of discouragement and a determination to stick it out whatever happened. Also, of course, intimate knowledge—only obtainable by personal presence—of the problems arising at incidents was of practical value in deciding on any adjustments which might become necessary and in maintaining close co-operation with other organizations concerned.

These were, no doubt, the sort of considerations which led the Commissioner and others to move about the Metropolitan District at night during raids. It was whilst Sir Philip Game was making one of these journeys that an H.E. bomb hit Scotland Yard itself early one morning, and after penetrating the roof and two floors made a mountain of concrete, bricks, furniture, files and index cards on his table. It was his habit on completing a tour to come back to the Yard and go to his room for a time. Fortunately on this occasion his arrival was about half an hour after the bomb had fallen. If he had returned that much earlier, the result would have been disastrous. However perhaps one can hardly class that as a "near miss". Anyone moving about London in those days must have had several much nearer.

The night when this bomb fell will long be remembered by Londoners. It was Saturday, May 10, 1941, the last of the major raids of the 1940-1 series and one of the nastiest. It is very clear in my own memory as I was just crawling thankfully into bed at about 8 a.m. on the Sunday morning after spending quite an exciting night on the roof of a high block of flats (finishing with houses burning on three sides of us and a gas main flaming outside the front door) when the telephone rang to inform me that Scotland Yard had been hit. When I arrived, I found the usual pile of rubble, paper, etc., in the roadway and, up above, a large mass of bricks and masonry overhanging in a

most threatening manner. On the heap of rubble, which was not a place to loiter, were two young women, who seemed to be looking for something. "Who in Heaven's name are you and what are you up to?" I asked. "We're registry girls, sir, and we're trying to find some of the cards from our index." "Really," I said, "that's pretty good of you. But I'd sooner lose a few dozen cards than two such zealous people. Would you please go indoors right away."

Actually a whole index containing over a million cards had come down. This was in the long run a blessing in disguise, as it was one of those indexes that had got a bit out of control. It had a lot of names in it which ought to come out but the labour of getting them out was so great that the task had been constantly shirked. The bomb left no option. We had to start again. The job took some weeks and one realized for the first time what a lot of cards a million cards is.

It was after this same air-raid of May 10th-11th that an article appeared in one of the more popular London dailies which made quite a few people scratch their heads and wonder (if they didn't tear their hair and rage).

The topic of the article was the disgraceful state of the streets of London on the Monday following the raid.

The writer of the article, who had apparently spent the night in question at a safe distance from London, was deeply aggrieved because in the course of his journey to his office on the Monday morning after the raid, his car had been deflected by barred streets twice or, it may have been, three times, and he had been late in arriving at his place of business. This state of affairs indicated to him a sad degree of laziness and incompetence on the part of those responsible. They had had no less than twenty-four hours to put things right and there could be no justification for allowing people to be thus inconvenienced.

To the air-raid wardens, demolition parties, fire service, police and others, who had toiled from dawn to dark on Sunday—and many of them during Sunday night as well—this was a bit too much. We therefore collected a few facts and figures to pass to the editor of the paper. We found that on Sunday morning all the bridges from Chelsea downwards were out of action, there was no way into the City at all by road, all the main east to west thoroughfares in inner London were blocked and the list of streets which could not for some reason be used, typed on foolscap (single spacing), covered between thirty and forty pages. I have not the record before me now and my

recollection may be at fault at some point, but I think I have understated rather than over-stated the position. The large number of impassable streets and bridges was due to a variety of causes, not by any means always to H.E. bombs. Some were blocked by fire-engines fighting fires, many by hoses and a large number by delayed action bombs.

Though this raid was, for Central and West London, the worst of the series (with a death-roll of 1,480 and 1,500 injured), by Monday morning, thanks to a lot of hard work, conditions were not much worse than they had been on some previous occasions, and movement in most directions was possible. The editor was duly informed of the facts, but I remember no apology.

The Scotland Yard buildings were really very fortunate. They offer a fairly extensive target but this was the only time that they were hit by an H.E. We had our due allowance of incendiaries and nearly lost our roof on two occasions. We thought we had provided as far as was humanly possible against this risk by organizing a highly efficient fire picket and covering the floors of all the lofts with fire-proof material, on the assumption that incendiaries weighing at least two pounds and travelling at several hundred miles an hour would pierce the roof itself. This they declined to do. The wooden lining under the slates was so strong that the incendiaries nearly always stuck in positions which were extremely difficult to get at, and where everything was favourable for the starting of an extensive fire. It was to meet this contingency that the Scotland Yard roof was later covered with a network of steel scaffolding which made external access possible to any point in a very short time. This plan was imitated in some other similar buildings, including the Houses of Parliament.

Sir Philip Game's relations with the Branch Boards—the men's representative organization—were an interesting study for me, as I had watched three previous Commissioners, each of whom had his own "technique", dealing with the same task.

There are two principal ways in which Branch Boards can make their troubles known to the Commissioner. One is by written representation, generally in the form of resolutions. The other is by deputation. Sometimes the two are combined. The Board may put their case in writing and instead of getting a written reply, send a deputation—generally five in number—to elaborate their views and receive an oral reply.

Discussions with these deputations frequently lasted quite a long

time and were of value to the Commissioner himself as well as to the men. A great deal depends on the Commissioner's attitude on these occasions, his willingness to listen patiently and to be sympathetic even if unable to be compliant. Sir Philip Game was certainly patience itself. He seldom interrupted the flow, even if it seemed to be getting rather a long way from the main stream, and he seldom gave a definite and uncompromising negative answer, preferring often to give further and more leisured thought to the points made before reaching a conclusion.

One advantage of this technique was that if, as occasionally happened, he felt that the Board's suggestion was quite obviously impossible and said so, the deputation was so surprised that they made no attempt at argument or resistance.

It seems odd to many people that a disciplined body like a Police Force should have legalized machinery for representation. Why can't they, people ask, ventilate their grievances—personal and general—through their "normal channels", that is to say through their senior officers? In a perfect world these normal channels should suffice. Theoretically the man with a personal trouble should be willing and able to take it to his Sub-Divisional Inspector or Superintendent with the certainty of finding sympathy and the righting of any wrong that might exist. Theoretically also the bulk grievances—pay, hours, conditions of service and so forth—should be appreciated and dealt with by the authorities without the necessity of any representations from the men themselves.

Actually things don't work out quite like that. The individual constable or sergeant finds it easier to explain his trouble to a comrade of his own rank, such as his elected representative. He may get the advice he needs right away. (An experienced representative is likely to be a fairly shrewd person.) Or the representative may put the case on behalf of the "complainant" to the officer in charge of the Sub-Division or Division. If he fails to obtain satisfaction locally, he may lay it before the Branch Board and in due course it may come up to the Commissioner in the form of a resolution. Similarly with general grievances. Authorities, however wise, may not always know exactly where the shoe pinches and how much. The Federation organization gives them a constitutional and regularized means of finding out, and also a convenient channel through which explanations can be conveyed to members of the Force when the pinching of the shoe cannot for some good reason be relieved. There is also of course

the safety-valve argument. If the Federation does its job there is no possibility of a suppressed grievance existing without responsible officers knowing about it.

Such are the arguments for the system of legalized representation. But it has its drawbacks. Those who take on this sort of work, that is to say the men's representatives, accept a big responsibility. They have an obvious duty to the men they represent, but their duty to the public—whose paid servants they are, like all policemen—is paramount, or should be. This fact is liable sometimes to be overlooked or at least not kept so much in mind as it might be. A contented Police Force is essential to the well-being of the community. Efficiency in an organization in which activity—or the reverse—depends on the keenness of a number of unsupervised individuals must obviously rise or fall with the state of mind of each of those individuals. A discontented worker in other spheres may drive as many rivets or sell as many pounds of tea as a contented man. But there can be no piece work in the police and a discontented policeman won't give the same return for his money as a contented one. He won't catch so many thieves and he won't put that extra bit of keenness into his job which distinguishes the first-class policeman from the "uniform-carrier".

Discontent can arise (apart from purely localized troubles, such as stomach-ache or a cantankerous boss) from grievances, either real or imaginary. By real grievances I mean wrongs which could be righted and are not. Imaginary grievances may be either wrongs which are not wrongs at all and are only represented as such, or wrongs which for some reason are unrightable. The danger with elected representatives is that their importance in the eyes of their constituents increases with the number and intensity of the grievances that they can find to ventilate and the amount of excitement they can stimulate about them.

Contented men take little interest in representatives, but representatives must have interest taken in them or they pine away. There is consequently a permanent incentive on representatives to stimulate discontent rather than to assuage it, to magnify grievances rather than to minimize them, to keep the pot boiling rather than to let it cool.

Evidence of what I mean is easy to find in their publications. Little attempt is made to present both sides of a case impartially. That would hardly produce the desired effect, which would seem to be to make the police see themselves as a grievously ill-used body of men, sadly put upon by callous authorities.

Some excellent police officers of the highest principles have taken up Branch Board work and their efforts have undoubtedly been instrumental in securing a number of improvements in conditions of service which might not otherwise have been obtained. So far as this has occurred, they have discharged the function prescribed for them by the Act of Parliament which brought them into existence. They have made representations to the authorities and some of those representations have borne fruit. Their efforts have contributed to the happiness and contentment of the Force and made it to that extent more efficient. They have thus rendered a service to the public as well as to their constituents.

So far so good. If they went no further than that, they would deserve unqualified commendation. But commendation becomes qualified when they extend their activities into the field of propaganda. By circulating statements which present a distorted and one-sided view of a case, they engender discontent where none existed before. The exaggeration of grievances has the same effect.

Their principal publication is the Annual Report of the Federation (the national body) which is intended to inform the inspectors, sergeants and constables what topics have arisen and what action has been taken on them. This could quite well be done by reproducing resolutions and replies and nothing more. It is in fact used as a medium of propaganda. It makes little pretence at impartiality. Reading it without any knowledge of the topics treated, one might conclude that the Service was riddled with discontent, that the authorities were a lot of dilatory, pig-headed obstructionists, and that the forces of evil in Whitehall were continually triumphing over the champions of justice and equity personified by the Joint Central Committee of the Federation.

That is not, I need hardly say, the exact position. Most of the changes asked for by the representatives have financial significance. Besides straightforward pay questions, there are matters such as leave, widows' pensions, hours of duty and so forth. In practically all such matters compliance involves expenditure and expenditure involves taxes and rates. And then there are the things officially called "repercussions". If the policeman gets better pay, that will cost x million pounds a year. But the firemen will base a claim on the rise given to the policemen, and that means $x + y$ millions. If the policemen and the fireman, why not also comparable grades in the Civil Service? And so it goes on, as those who have to deal with such problems know

only too well. But the Federation is not interested in such troubles, nor do they wish their constituents to bother their heads about them. They seem to visualize the public purse as an inexhaustible fund on which they should be able to draw, and *would* be able, if it were not for the unreasonable attitude of the unsympathetic persons guarding it, who keep on saying "no" when they might just as easily say "yes."

Policemen and their representatives are not of course alone in this attitude to the public purse. They share it with the majority of the population, including many Members of Parliament, who on Monday bewail the burden of taxation and on Tuesday deplore the niggardliness of the Government. (Don't we all?)

Perhaps it would be asking rather much of the Federation to suggest that they should place these general aspects before their constituents, if only because such considerations should be obvious enough to every intelligent voter in a democratic state. But they might at least allow a hint to escape them occasionally of the two-sidedness of the problems which they portray as so simple, and they might avoid conveying the impression that those who fail to agree with them are actuated by stupidity or a passion for obstruction.

My personal view, for what it is worth, is that the Federation and the Branch Boards would gain in prestige and in effectiveness by greater moderation and impartiality, not only in the eyes of the authorities (that goes without saying) but in those of the men they represent.

Policemen are an intelligent body of men and their duties give them plenty of experience in listening to the outpourings of hot-heads on every sort of subject—political, religious and economic. They must necessarily become fairly expert in the detection of all sorts of misrepresentation, distortion or exaggeration. The normal reaction to such forms of utterance, whether written or oral, is either antagonism or tolerant amusement. The speaker or writer once convicted of having deceived us forfeits our confidence. Thenceforward we suspect his every utterance. Whereas if we recognize him as a fair-minded adviser, not a hot-head, not a gas-bag and not an exaggerator, then his indignation, should he produce it, will be impressive and gain our active support. All very platitudinous, no doubt, but how often overlooked!

I had, as it happens, many opportunities during my service with the police of gauging the reactions of officers of all ranks and of several different Forces to the activities of the representative bodies. I seldom encountered anything like hostility. The general opinion seemed to

be that some such organization was necessary, that it served a useful purpose and that on the whole the job was well done. Such criticisms as I met were often on the lines of those I have already made, and sometimes—really much the same thing—that claims which were in fact only partially supported had on occasions been represented as having general approval.

This did not imply, I'm sure, any suggestion of dishonesty of intention on the part of representatives. Although the machinery for enabling the Boards to ascertain the views of a Force on any subject is sound in principle and should produce correct results, it is not infallible. In any such organization there is always a danger of the vocal element representing only a minority without perhaps being aware of the fact. Those who are unvocal may still have opinions, but if they remain unexpressed it is no doubt difficult for anybody to assess them.

One last point I would like to make before leaving this topic and that is that Branch Boards would hold an even higher place in the esteem of those in authority if they devoted a little more energy to matters of efficiency. "Welfare and efficiency" are the two topics with which they are authorized by the Act of Parliament to deal. In practice their attention seems to be so fully occupied with welfare—i.e. mainly the airing of grievances or the making of claims—that they have little time left for efficiency, i.e. suggestions for the improvement of the machine. In the Metropolitan Force, inspectors and sergeants sometimes produce helpful ideas, but seldom the constables or the joint body representing all the three ranks. No machine is perfect and in constantly changing conditions minor adjustments may become desirable which escape the notice of authority but should be—sometimes at any rate—obvious to the man on the job. Efficiency suggestions from Boards are always welcomed and always fully examined, but they seldom appear.

Sir Philip Game will be remembered by the Force as a Commissioner who spared no pains to secure fair treatment, so far as was in his power to do so, for the Force as a whole and for individual members of it whose cases came before him. In discipline cases his bias was always in favour of the accused. He was more prone to commend than to criticize and when criticism was necessary he took trouble to make the operation as painless as possible.

His régime was the essential calm after the Trenchard storm, the aspirin after the headache. A police machine, like any other machine,

is all the better for a periodical overhaul. This overhaul should be drastic and carried out in the shortest possible time so as to minimize the unsettling effect. When it is over, the running-in process follows and, after that, the less fiddling the better for a while. In other words, reformers should not come too often or stay too long. If those who follow them are wise, they content themselves with such minor adjustments as may be needed.

One of the good things by which Sir Philip Game's Commissioner-ship will be remembered is the Boys' Club bearing his name at Croydon, which is being run by the Police of "Z" (Croydon) Division. There is nothing new in the idea of a police club for boys. Norwich started one more than twenty years ago and other borough Forces have followed suit, but London is a much more difficult proposition and the Croydon experiment is the first of its kind. If, as there is every reason to hope, it is successful, perhaps other Divisions may be inspired to try their hands.

The fundamental difficulty about London is that people don't live where they work. In a provincial town there is a cohesion, a local pride or patriotism, which will rally the citizens to the support of any plan likely to improve conditions in their town. Juvenile crime is no new problem though the war has intensified it by the absence of fathers, the pre-occupation of mothers (who spent their time working or queueing) and the debasement of moral standards always produced by war. When nations revert to the law of the jungle to settle their differences, when violent men and violent methods dominate the news and the films, when life is cheap and property cheaper, and when education is disorganized and desultory, it is inevitable that young forming minds should tend to develop abnormally. Their heroes are the tough guys, and the small boys who like to pose as such organize gangs and go out looking for excitement. They start very likely with the exploration of bombed houses and that leads them on to shop-breaking and other similar exploits. Both in war and peace the ordinary boys' clubs, Air Training and Cadet Corps and the Boy Scouts tend to attract the sort of boys who would not be likely to get themselves into trouble anyway. The bad, or potentially bad, boys, the little tough guys already referred to, are liable to shrink from any sort of discipline and still more from any organization with a religious flavour which is likely to try and improve their minds or save their souls.

The aim of a police club should be to do all they can to get hold of such boys. Their normal duties bring police into contact with the

rougher elements and they have opportunities of influencing boys who seem to be looking for trouble, in the direction of a healthier outlet for their energies. To the boy a constable is himself a fairly tough sort of chap and a club run by police may make a stronger appeal to him than others for that reason. He knows that he will get good boxing under skilled teachers, well organized games, and various other opportunities of exhibiting his prowess, and that there will be no sloppiness.

In some American towns they have what they call Junior Police Corps. Boys are invited to join what is primarily a club, with all the usual activities and amenities, but it is a condition of joining that in return for what they get, they must give something by way of service. They must learn life-saving and first aid, they must take an interest in the government of their town, they will be taught how it is run, where the various institutions, hospitals and welfare organizations are to be found and what their functions are. When they get to a certain age, if they have reached a proper standard of proficiency in these various activities, they are given uniforms and are called upon to turn out and lend a hand to police on important occasions. They act as messengers, help in the parking of cars, direct people who ask the way and generally make themselves useful in a variety of ways.

There are three good principles behind this plan. The first is that "something for nothing" is nearly always unhealthy. The second is that the best way to keep the adolescent on the right track is to give him responsibility and a sense of his own importance. The third is that knowledge of, and pride in, the "home town" make for good citizenship and provide the raw material for sound and honest local government. Selected boys get other rewards besides those provided by the club itself. They are taken for trips to places of interest, they are given free or cheap tickets for football and baseball matches, they are allowed to see over factories, gas and electric plants, transport depots, etc., and are taken behind the scenes at police stations, fire stations and so forth.

It was during the 1939-45 war that particulars of this movement in America reached us at Scotland Yard. I at once wrote to the Chief of Police at Boston, Mass. (where the idea seems to have originated) and obtained full particulars. The plan seemed to be well worth examination and possibly, to some extent, of imitation. Sir Philip Game, who had always been keen on youth organizations and had definite views about them, was much interested in the idea but we agreed after talking

it over, that there was little hope of getting anything of the kind going in London during the war. All we could do would be to make a few preliminary inquiries as to the possibilities of financial assistance from Government funds and then put the idea into cold storage for the time being.

However, as it turned out, our view of possibilities was unduly pessimistic. On one of his visits to the police at Croydon the Commissioner happened to mention the boys' club idea to a keen and energetic superintendent recently appointed to that Division. Croydon is, and always has been, different from any other area in the Metropolitan Police District. It has a strongly pronounced local consciousness and regards itself as a separate entity, rather than as a part of London. It is not so much a suburb as a satellite town, where a fairly high proportion of the residents not only sleep but work within its boundaries. For this reason strong local support is generally forthcoming for any scheme thought likely to improve conditions of life in the borough.

The superintendent naturally appreciated all this and decided to see whether something could be done. That was more than two years ago. Various difficulties and delays have been encountered, not the least of which was that just after a suitable house had been secured, the V.I. attack fell upon the Croydon area and paralysed all non-essential activities. For police, especially senior officers, the problem was how to find time for meals and sleep between the incidents, and, even when the attacks petered out, it was some time before attention could be deflected from present tragedies to the planning of the future. Then there was the difficulty of getting any adaptation work done. However, the keenness of the superintendent and his brother officers, with the help of local enthusiasm, overrode the obstacles and a start has been made.

I feel myself that there is a great future for the development of this side line of police activity. It is the *prevention* of crime in the most fundamental sense of the term. A boys' club should be something a great deal more than merely a means of keeping the young out of mischief. Emphasis must be on service given for benefits received. Unless this idea is kept in the forefront from the start and all the time, the police club movement will cease to have any special individuality and will lose its opportunity of doing a creative job of real value which no other body has the same facilities for performing.

The financial aspects of police clubs for boys should present no insuperable difficulties. For the present at any rate reliance is placed mainly on private generosity, supplemented by the proceeds of boxing competitions and other entertainments organized by the local police. A limited amount of assistance is also obtainable from the Local Education Authorities.

It may be that all such activities will be absorbed into the National Youth Movement. That would be, to say the least, unfortunate. A scheme of this kind derives its vitality from the very fact that the people who originated it and are financing and managing it, have freedom to control it in accordance with their own ideas. It is their child, and their interest in its upbringing and development derives from a sort of parental pride which would tend to disappear if financial responsibility were transferred to some official organization.

Any plan of this sort must of course work in close co-operation with other Youth movements, particularly with those officially directed, and there is little harm in the acceptance of a limited amount of financial assistance from official sources. But such assistance, however small, gives the authorities, quite properly, the right to know what is being done and to satisfy themselves that public money is being wisely expended, and if financial responsibility were surrendered entirely, control and the power to direct development would inevitably go too.

So long therefore as sufficient charitably disposed persons survive with the will and the power to support such schemes, every effort should be made to retain freedom from official control. The vast amount of voluntary effort which is devoted to the management of hospitals, schools, clubs and societies in this country may not be always 100 per cent efficient. There may be greater technical efficiency in the paid official. But the paid official, however keen and good (and he is frequently both), has to work under orders and according to a standard pattern. His efforts must therefore unavoidably lack the humanity and elasticity which voluntary management is able to secure.

This has all been said many times in connection with the vexed question of voluntary hospitals. It applies with equal, if not greater, force to clubs and other youth movements, which depend entirely for their success on the individual enthusiasm, the inspiration and the original ideas of the people who start and run them.

It is true of course that, according to modern ideas, the education

of the young and the prevention of crime are both matters of national responsibility and if a new plan with these objects in view comes on the scene and produces results, the authorities must clearly be interested. It might be their duty to keep the plan alive if it looked like coming to grief through lack of funds or for other reasons. But it is greatly to be hoped that complete freedom of development on the lines laid down for themselves by the existing management may be possible for a long enough period to enable the soundness (or otherwise) of the idea to be clearly demonstrated.

One of the difficulties of a boys' club run by police in London arises from the liability of officers to be transferred from one Division to another on promotion. Success depends, particularly in the initial stages, on the wisdom of the individual officer who directs the affairs of the club and on the enthusiasm of those who collaborate with him in its management and day-to-day running. Often in such efforts there is one man whose inspiration and guidance are the main motive force. If he disappears there is the danger of a flop. There may of course be someone else ready to take on with equal wisdom and enthusiasm, but no officer can be directed to undertake this sort of work. It isn't a police duty and continuity must be therefore to some extent a matter of chance, though the interest shown by senior officers both at Scotland Yard and at District Headquarters naturally acts as a strong stimulus.

If the Croydon experiment should be successful it is hardly likely to remain in isolation for long. Difficulties may be greater in other districts, but that fact might in itself be found to act as a stimulus to superintendents and others who see in this idea a chance of striking at the root of the crime problem. Development on the lines followed in America, i.e. towards something in the nature of a Junior Police Corps, might become possible if several clubs scattered about the Metropolitan Police District were in existence. A healthy competition in games, boxing, etc., would also be likely to develop and for certain purposes a number of clubs might co-operate. The question would also arise, no doubt, in the event of favourable results being achieved, whether the allocation of a certain amount of "duty time" to the work could be justified. Though there is much to be said for relying solely on the services of men prepared to devote some of their off-duty time to this sort of work, there will always be the practical difficulty of giving regular attendance at specified hours without cutting across the normal incidence of police duties.

The preventive aspects of police work tend to be increasingly emphasized not only by writers on the subject but also by police officers themselves and generous official encouragement for any sound line of development will, no doubt, be forthcoming.

CHAPTER V

1946

OF Sir Harold Scott, who has been Commissioner since June, 1945, it would obviously be inappropriate to talk as he is still—at the time of writing—occupying the chair.

But a few generalizations may perhaps be permissible. The first is that, whatever may be said by the popular Press and the “anti-bureaucrats”, there is no finer or more useful product of our system of government than the No. 1 quality Civil Servant. In the service of the Government success is achieved by merit. The second-rate man may, by the luck of the game, rise to a certain level, as he will do in business or any other sphere, but to get to the top, the Civil Servant must show that he can deliver the goods, and he is usually tested in more than one sphere of work before he is given big responsibilities.

Besides administrative skill, he must have a wide knowledge of men and affairs, a shrewd judgment in dealing with people as well as problems, a keen eye for essentials, a readiness to accept responsibility and a capacity for hard work. Decisions on matters of big policy rest of course with Ministers, but they rely on their departmental chiefs to translate theory into practice, to tell them where the road they wish to travel will lead them, how the various persons or groups involved are likely to react and how conflicting interests may best be reconciled.

I remember Ramsay MacDonald when Prime Minister saying in an after-dinner speech that Ministers were apt to have their heads in the clouds a good deal and it was the business of the Civil Service to say to them from time to time: “Please mind the step.”

The business of government becomes steadily more complex and the burden of its discharge gets heavier year by year. The number of men with the brains (and the other qualities enumerated) to carry such burdens is not great and there is a real danger of a breakdown at the



The Commissioner's Room

top unless Press and public change their attitude to those who serve them.

What young man or woman of capacity and ambition will choose to make his career in the service of the state if it is represented to him as a somewhat contemptible safety-first refuge for the second-raters too timid to enter the competitive field of business?

No matter what party may be in power, the function of the executive in the machine of government must necessarily increase in scope and importance. It is vast already and though the individualists may shout themselves hoarse, the tendency of all Parliaments—whatever their complexion—is to put fresh jobs of work on to the Departments of State.

Thousands of millions of our money have to be collected and expended every year by the employees of the Crown and Local Authorities. On the efficient discharge of these enormous tasks depends the whole future of the country. The only hope is to attract the best brains from all educational levels and to make it worth their while not only by the career offered but also (and more important) by full recognition of the State service as an honourable profession universally respected and highly esteemed.

The acceptance by all parties of the principle of national insurance would seem to suggest that a desire for some measure of security is not in itself discreditable, and when security has become common form in all types of employment, perhaps this particular taunt against the Civil Servant may lose some of its force. In any case it should be obvious that the assumption of an attitude of derision towards those to whom we entrust the management of our affairs is a suicidal disservice to the community. Politicians also of course have their allowance of sneers and gibes, but they are at least in a position to defend themselves, which the Civil Servant is not.

Criticism is not deprecated and should not be resented. On the contrary it should be welcomed if it is reasonably well informed and as far as possible constructive. Heads of departments and others in responsible positions cannot possibly know what all their underlings are doing and if things are being done badly they are glad to be told—or should be.

One so often hears people complaining bitterly of some piece of stupidity or inefficiency and if one says: "What have you done about it?" the answer as often as not is: "Oh, I can't be bothered to write," or "It's not a bit of use to complain." Kind-hearted people

sometimes say: "I don't want to get the poor bloke into trouble." Quite clearly none of these attitudes is exactly helpful to the people who are trying their damndest to run their shows properly.

God knows, there is plenty of room for criticism. Particularly in war-time. How could it be otherwise? The Civil Service is a machine built to produce an output of goods of certain types. In war the output demanded is multiplied by x and entirely different types of product—for which the machine was not constructed—are required. At the same time a large proportion of the young, adaptable, trained personnel is removed to the Armed Forces. Their places are taken mainly by people with very slender experience of the sort of work required. There is also an admixture of persons with knowledge of the new kinds of work to be done: food experts for the Ministry of Food, business experts for the Ministry of Supply and so on.

This is the only possible way of tackling the job, but, with all the will in the world, teams so constructed do not always make ideal combinations, as they don't fully understand one another's play. The Civil Servant is trained in government methods but not in commercial methods; the trade expert understands trade but has little experience of the machinery of government.

In spite of all, some things have, by general consent, been pretty well done. Food rationing is an example. The Post Office, too, have done a colossal job of which more will be heard before long.* With them, as with many other departments, it was a case of more and more bricks with less and less straw.

Another source of friction in the relation between the executive and the public in war-time is the curtailment of so many of our freedoms. The officials who are charged with the enforcement of unpopular restrictions are often held at least partly responsible for their existence. It's the old story. The constable is blamed for the speed limit, the tax collector is abused for demanding so much money, and the ticket-collector is cursed because the train is late.

In war-time the number of these people who stand between us and what we want to do is very great. They are the visible personification of official interference and therefore unlikely to be over-popular. Everybody knows, when he bothers to think about it, that total war and liberty can't co-exist and that if any particular restriction is thought to be bad or unnecessary, Parliament should be blamed rather than the unfortunates employed to carry out its orders.

* See Ian Hay's book on the Post Office at War, now published.

Admittedly individual officials may be wooden, unsympathetic, rude or narrow-minded in their interpretations of the law. If the victim is annoyed and says so, who shall blame him? But is the percentage of ill-mannered officials any higher than the percentage of ill-mannered persons in any other walk of life? Do we write off all butchers because one butcher was surly or all dentists because one pulled out the wrong tooth?

Jacks-in-office will appear in any country, but bad manners and overbearingness are not national characteristics. When they occur they are part of the make-up of the man more than of the job. Ridicule is an excellent flagellant, but the danger is that in applying it wholesale—to the 99 per cent good as well as the 1 per cent bad—we may produce an effect precisely the reverse of what we want. If the whole school is punished for the offences of a few, the best boys of the future may choose some other school. It is very much a case of cutting off the nose to spite the face. A country gets the service it deserves and the best way to secure bad service is to deride good service. Perhaps the B.B.C. might ponder this aspect in vetting the programmes of their comedians. It must be terrible to have to produce a fresh lot of jokes every week and if the hard-pressed script-writers find the Civil Service gibe a useful supplement to mothers-in-law, policemen's feet, and the old school tie, it may seem fussy to grudge it them. But the B.B.C. has a national responsibility and from the nation's point of view there is a real boomerang danger.

This digression arose from the consideration of the phenomenon of a Civil Servant occupying the position of Commissioner of Police. It has never happened before and for that reason the choice provoked a certain amount of criticism, not so much in the Press (which took it quite quietly) as amongst those who regard a distinguished member of the Armed Forces as the only possible alternative to a policeman. There is something to be said for this point of view. The successful general, admiral or air marshal has presumably proved his capacity as a leader and controller of men, but his qualities as an administrator may be less certain. The successful Civil Servant on the other hand must be a good administrator but his qualities as a leader and controller of a disciplined force remain to some extent an unknown quantity. The head of a big Government Department has of course many thousands of human beings under his control, and there is an element of discipline involved in their management, but police discipline is

not quite the same. Whether it is more closely allied to that of the Armed Forces or to that of the Civil Service, who shall say?

For a Commissioner of Police certain qualities are essential and others are desirable. Some of the essentials have been mentioned already. One that has not been referred to, and perhaps almost the most important of all, is the capacity of inspiring a large number of men scattered over 700 square miles, with a sense of confidence. They must have confidence in his sense of justice of course, and confidence also that he will champion their cause if their cause is just. He must be approachable within reasonable limits, sympathetic without softness, a disciplinarian without being a martinet. He must have no political views or prejudices; if he has, he must keep them in the office safe. He must check the dangerous exuberance of extremists—from ultra-violets to infra-reds—but on no account must he or his men take sides or even appear to do so. He is open to attack in Press and Parliament if one of his 20,000 men puts a foot wrong. Nosey Parkers wait in ambush for him. When political disturbances occur—as in the Fascist-Communist troubles in the East End before the war—damage to life and property must be prevented or minimized, and force must be used if gentler methods fail. Both sides in such disputes are eager to detect bias in police action. It's quite all right to throw bottles or stones at "the law" but if the law hits back, then the representative of some worthy society takes notes, writes to the papers or gets questions asked in the House. He is blind to the provocation and sees only brutality and callousness in the unprovoked violence of a bloodthirsty constabulary.

A Commissioner, however perfect, cannot of course ensure correct police action at the scenes of trouble. All he can do is to support his men stoutly when he believes that they have acted properly and at the same time make it clear to all that he will not stand for any unnecessary or partisan violence. By so doing and by setting an example himself of calmness and impartiality, he will do all that a Commissioner can do at long range to influence the general conduct of the Force in times of difficulty.

Enough has perhaps been said to indicate that the position of Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis is no sinecure.

It isn't so much a question of exceptional brain-power. The problems to be tackled are less complex than those which present themselves to the heads of some of the big Government Departments, but a Commissioner of Police cannot, like a doctor, bury his mistakes.

The limelight of publicity will be on them and a minor error of judgment or lack of decision may have disproportionate consequences.

That persons possessing the qualifications required are rare is sufficiently indicated by the amount of head-scratching that goes on whenever the post falls vacant and also by the fact that in the whole history of the Metropolitan Police not once has a man joining originally as a constable reached the Commissioner's chair (though two have got as far as Assistant Commissioner), and never yet has a provincial Chief Constable been appointed to the post.

One of the penalties of distinction in the public service is to become fair game for scribblers (like myself) who assume the right not only to state facts but also to criticize or commend, but it is perhaps seemly in a record of this kind to regard those still on the stage as entitled to a degree of immunity, particularly when the recorder was himself so lately one of the actors.

It is for this reason alone that I have abstained from comment on the present régime, but I am a little scared that the abstention may be interpreted as implying doubts or misgivings about it. That is not the position at all. In fact the very reverse is the case. When I walked out of Scotland Yard finally in January, 1946, I felt that I was leaving behind what Lord Byng would have passed as a "happy family", where the general feeling was one of complete confidence in the occupant of the paternal chair.

The considerations which suggest a degree of reticence about the reigning Commissioner apply equally to those working immediately round him, but it may be permissible perhaps and of interest to some, to hear very briefly what sort of people they are who direct the affairs of the Metropolitan Police from Scotland Yard.

The second-in-command is the Deputy Commissioner. This post has been occupied for a number of years by Colonel the Hon. Sir Maurice Drummond of the Black Watch. A soldier by profession, he came to the Yard originally to act as personal assistant to Lord Trenchard in 1932. His retirement at the age of sixty-eight has been announced.*

Colonel Drummond is a good example of the mental and physical toughness of the Scot. He tramples his way through a pile of files as doggedly as he does through his native heather, though, I suspect, with less enjoyment. One of his specialities for some years was "discipline", which mainly consists of dealing with offences by police

* Since retired.

officers and often personally presiding over discipline boards. I don't know what the police themselves think about it, but if I were an erring constable I'd be glad enough to have my case tried by "the Deputy". I know that he would read every word of it, however voluminous the evidence, and that I should get a scrupulously fair hearing. If there were a doubt I should get the benefit of it. Like most Britishers, the policeman is usually prepared to take his medicine if he has slipped up, but he attaches great importance to the conduct of cases, and senior officers, all of whom have this duty to perform from time to time, acquire reputations throughout the Force according to their attitude to accused officers appearing before them. I remember one high-ranking officer, now long departed, who though personally kind-hearted and genial, was an absolute tiger at a Board, brief in his hearings and severe in his punishments. He became so unpopular in consequence that when his death was announced barely suppressed cheers were heard in some parade sheds.

There are four Assistant Commissioners besides the one who has the status of Deputy Commissioner. They are known as A.C.A., A.C.B., A.C.C., A.C.D. from the Departments A., B., C. and D. which they control. The Assistant Commissioner appointed to succeed Colonel Drummond as Deputy when he retires is Mr. Jack Nott-Bower, now struggling with police problems in Vienna. He came to Scotland Yard from India. Lord Trenchard brought him in. Like most Indian policemen he rides, shoots and plays games with zest and skill. It is just as well for him perhaps that he can handle an automatic, as he had a personal shooting match in his young days with an Indian extremist. They potted at one another for quite a time from behind trees and Nott-Bower was hit at least once before he managed to put his opponent out of action. It was in connection with this incident, I think, that "N.B." got his King's Police Medal (Gallantry). As an Assistant Commissioner (now Deputy designate) his principal assets are a quick brain, clear judgment, imperturbability and long experience of all sorts of police work.

In Mr. Nott-Bower's absence in Austria, his post (A.C.A.) is filled by Major Ferguson,* who came to the Metropolitan Police from the Army. He also was an importation of the Trenchard era. A man of ideas with the energy to push them through and the knack of securing the co-operation of those who work with, or under, him. The fact that he made a success of the war-time amalgamation of

* Since appointed Chief Constable Kent County Constabulary.

Forces in Sussex is, to those who know the extent and nature of the difficulties, a good indication of the sort of man he is. He talks in short bursts, rather like a Lewis gun.

A.C.B. (Traffic) is Sir Alker Tripp.* Either as yachtsman or painter or writer or traffic expert, he must already be well known to a wide circle. His official life has been spent entirely at Scotland Yard and he is the only instance, so far, of a member of the civil staff becoming an Assistant Commissioner. In latter years he has devoted much time to the problem of town-planning with particular reference to traffic requirements. He has written extensively on the subject and his views have secured a wide measure of acceptance.

The police should know something about traffic and accidents, as they spend much of their lives watching the traffic move and the accidents happen. For twenty years Sir Alker Tripp has been studying the results of police observation. With this experience, an active brain and a good power of expression, he should be peculiarly well able to make a valuable contribution to the problem of reducing the road slaughter.

Mr. Ronald Howe has charge of C. Department. He is a barrister by profession and came to Scotland Yard from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. You might not think it to look at him, but he is quite a notable scholar. I don't mean that he looks stupid. On the contrary. But he hasn't got the mien I associate with high scholarship. His brow doesn't beetle and his clothes are exceptionally tidy. ("Tidy" is perhaps an under-statement.)

Mr. Howe does not write much on paper. It is said of him that he normally uses one of two minutes in dealing with official files. One is a short minute and the other is a long minute. The short one is "No" and the long one is "Yes". Which reminds me that a few years ago I came across an old verse somewhere which seemed to me such a good tonic for some of the more verbose members of the staff that I had it printed on a card and given a limited and select circulation. Perhaps it is well known, but it was new to me:

The written word
Should be as hard as stone,
As clear as light,
As clean as bone.
Two words are not
As good as one.

* Since retired.

The last on the list (in alphabetical order only) of Assistant Commissioners is A.C.D., Sir George Abbiss. His chief claim to fame is *that he rose to his present rank after joining as a constable*. In the 117 years' history of the Metropolitan Force this feat has only been accomplished once before. It's a long journey, involving nine promotions and requiring an unusual combination of qualities to achieve it. I have often envied Sir George Abbiss his uncannily accurate memory. When a question arose—perhaps at a Commissioner's Conference—I was often able to recall that we'd had it up before, but if we had, the chances were strong that A.C.D. would trot out from the neat pigeon-holes of his mind, precise details of the circumstances, the arguments and the decision and that 1,174 men were affected.

He is also one of the few senior officers with a real interest in, and knowledge of, police history. One of the unfortunate results of the general lack of interest in this subject in past years has been that many of the relics and other historically interesting objects—books, pictures, uniforms, truncheons, equipment, etc.—which should be preserved at the Yard have disappeared into private hands. Sir George Abbiss has taken a lot of trouble to correct this tendency, so far as is still possible, and has an interesting collection of truncheons and other valuable relics of former days.

Of Mr. R. L. Jackson, my successor as Secretary, I will say only that if his quality proves to be as generous as his quantity, he should fill the bill with something over. "Do we buy our secretaries by weight?" someone asked me. "If so, this one must have cost a tidy bit." In former days he used his weight to some effect in the boxing ring. Later as a barrister in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions he made his bulky presence felt in the criminal courts. Now he overflows the Secretary's chair at Scotland Yard, holding down a job in which physical weight is less necessary than his other attributes—a sense of humour and an understanding of human beings.

The last of the people in the front row of the stalls is the Solicitor, Mr. T. MacD. Baker, generally known for some reason as "Mac-Baker". His is a troublesome job. Though he has a capable team it is quite a small one. Cases in which the Commissioner has to be represented occur irregularly at any one of umpteen police courts, sessions and assizes, scattered over the 700 square miles of the Metropolitan Police District, and sometimes beyond it. Judges and magistrates get quite stuffy if, when a case is called, the Commissioners'

representative is not forthcoming and, what with the "chances and changes of this mortal life", it's not an easy business to meet all the conflicting obligations.

I don't suggest that this sort of jigsaw puzzle work is MacBaker's primary function. It is merely rather a harassing element. There are of course many others, far more arduous and far more responsible. I will leave them to be imagined as I'm talking about the man rather than his task. MacBaker refuses to be "condemned to earth for ever, shut from heaven". He delights in sailing about the skies in gliders and other aerial contrivances and managed to find time during the war to run a wing (or squadron perhaps) of the Air Training Corps. He is very keen on the adventurous youth of England being given fair chances.

I could go on down the scale with the Deputy Assistant Commissioners (now called Commanders), Assistant Secretaries and others. But there are many hundreds and I should not know where to stop. I can guess the patient reader's answer and I agree, but would like to mention one more character before leaving the Yard. Not a super-detective (they get plenty of the limelight without my assistance), not even a super-administrator, but a super-liftman. Dick's claim to attention is that he has one of those personalities which do more to maintain morale than Cabinet Ministers' speeches or the exhortations of leader-writers. Nearly every day he finds something fresh to say or some old thing with a new twist of his own.

An official of worthy appearance was in the lift with me one day. I couldn't place him and when he had got out I asked Dick: "Who was that?" "That's Mr. X.," said Dick. "Who is Mr. X.?" I asked. "I don't exactly know, sir, but he bides his time on the third floor."

Most of Dick's remarks related to the weather. It's a wonderful topic skilfully handled and Dick's handling had much originality. On a Monday morning in mid-winter, for instance: "Rotten old day, sir, yesterday, only one thing to be done with it. Firewatching." Not a very exalted line of wit perhaps. It's the manner rather than the matter of it that counts. Anyway, I admire a man who can breathe life into a dead job.

CHAPTER VI

INSIDE SCOTLAND YARD

THOUGH a number of things happen in Scotland Yard which would not be found happening elsewhere, it is primarily a large administrative office conducting business in much the same way as business is conducted in an ordinary Government Department.

In this chapter I propose to describe briefly some of the things that go on in the Yard and how the business is organized.

"Organization" is a dreary word and is liable to be also a dreary topic, of more professional than general interest. But as bits of the insides of the Yard have already been presented to the public—with varying degrees of accuracy—in detective stories and crime plays, it may be that a more complete picture is called for.

An Assistant Commissioner who retired some years ago said to me one day: "Y'know, Graham, there are two kinds of people in this place, the work-grabbers and the work-shirkers. Thank God, I'm one of the shirkers."

This somewhat picturesque dictum had a lot of truth in it and might be applied to almost any Department or Office. We all know the human octopus who stretches out his tentacles in all directions and draws into his branch every item of work which can possibly be regarded as having anything whatever to do with his loosely defined functions. His motives (like most human motives) are mixed—both good and bad. He is naturally an industrious person; he has a commendable appetite for work and usually no counter-interests. At the same time he likes to see his Department taking a more and more important place in the general scheme of things and he likes to feel that he has a finger in every pie and is one of the really "big noises".

At the same time the "grabber" is usually a jealous person, jealous both of his colleagues and his subordinates. He is slow in giving information or advice to other Departments and he takes care that his

subordinates do not "shine before men" too much, lest they detract in some measure from his own personal brilliance. If you want information from him, he is liable to say, "That's all right. You leave that to me. I'll see to it."

At the other extreme is the "shirker", who leans heavily on his subordinates and is perfectly content to allow the grabber to grab. He doesn't believe in exerting himself unduly and so long as the wheels go round he is not much concerned as to the sources of the power that turns them. He starts no hares, he originates no fresh ideas, his inclination is to let sleeping dogs lie and to say "No" rather than "Yes" to any troublesome request or proposal.

There is a story of a man who in his later years held a position of some importance in the Commissioner's Office. This was a very long time ago of course. His minute on nine out of ten of the cases put up to him for decision was "Usual action". Receiving this minute on a peculiarly difficult and doubtful case, one of his subordinates returned the file to him with a further memorandum in which he pointed out that the circumstances were quite exceptional and that a clear ruling was needed. The old gentleman pondered for a while and then wrote: "Usual action in exceptional circumstances."

Even Cabinet Ministers are not always guiltless of leaning heavily on their permanent staff. There was a Home Secretary not so very many years ago who avoided taking decisions if he could possibly help it. An important question was submitted to him in a statement which set out the pros and cons and offered two alternative courses, requesting the Minister's decision. The statement came back to the writer with the Home Secretary's ruling: "I agree" (initials).

Perhaps the most important thing in the management of an office or a branch is the correct devolution of responsibility. A good chief must keep his finger on the pulse, as it were, of his various Departments, but if he attempts to exercise too close and detailed a supervision, he is liable not only to find himself submerged in paper work but also to discourage his subordinates and make them, if they are any good, feel that they are not trusted or not regarded as capable of running their own show.

If something goes wrong, as for instance a faulty decision in one of the branches or a tactless letter, there is a temptation to require all such cases to be submitted for higher decision in future. This is nearly always the wrong thing to do. Occasional lapses are inevitable and in most cases it is enough to make the head of the offending

branch realize the fault and himself take such steps as may be possible to prevent a recurrence. Should any particular branch make a habit of dropping bricks, then more drastic action may be necessary and someone may need a change of air.

This is all obvious enough, but in my experience it is comparatively rare to find a chief who hits the happy mean between over-control and under-control.

Even more important, no doubt, than any question of organization is the selection of personnel. The most scientific and up-to-date organization will creak if the key posts are filled by unsuitable people, whilst an illogical and haphazard arrangement will deliver the goods if the important people know their jobs and understand the meaning of that blessed word "co-operation".

The chief who is a "bad picker" or who, in making promotions, is obsessed by the claims of seniority rather than those of merit is never likely to achieve maximum efficiency.

A story is told of Admiral "Jackie" Fisher, who had the reputation of being pretty ruthless in discarding and side-tracking the inefficient and thrusting forward those he believed to be good. He was inspecting a teleprinter or some similar device (a novelty at that time) by which messages tapped out at one place could be automatically recorded in writing at another and distant place. He was asked if he would like to send a message in order to see how the machine worked. He took a slip of paper and wrote: "Favouritism is the secret of efficiency."

"Favouritism" was perhaps an unfortunate word to use because it suggests nepotism and the promotion of personal friends, but no doubt what he meant was that efficiency could only be secured by the speedy promotion, regardless of seniority, of those whose ability and keenness had found favour in the eyes of the authorities.

It is understandable that representative bodies—staff associations, federations, branch boards and such—should distrust all methods of selection which depend on the opinions of individuals or even of promotion boards. They know by experience that such methods sometimes lead to the favouring of yes-men, window-dressers and those who have managed in one way or another to make themselves agreeable to their immediate superiors. Associations therefore usually hanker after more "automatic" methods under which claims to promotion are made to depend on length of service (i.e. seniority) or on competitive examinations.

The Metropolitan Police Branch Boards (i.e. the men's legal representative bodies) have for years been discontented with the promotion system and Sir Philip Game spent many hours listening patiently to their views and trying to devise some scheme which would not only *be* fair but *seem* fair to all aspirants and at the same time secure maximum efficiency. He steadfastly set his face against any system of competitive examination on the ground that ability to commit long and complicated regulations and orders to memory or to answer questions on paper or *viva voce* is no indication of suitability for higher positions. In police work as in most occupations, characteristics which are not susceptible of precise measurement are far more important than knowledge of regulations. Personality, powers of leadership, forcefulness and calmness in emergency are essential qualities, and none of them can be assessed by anything more exact than the opinions of the people for whom and with whom the individuals have worked.

The same considerations apply, though to a lesser degree, in an ordinary Public Department. The business of Government tends to become more and more complicated and the problems which have to be dealt with by even quite junior officials are so involved that a pretty good mental equipment is needed to tackle them. Reasonably good brains are therefore a *sine qua non*, but they must be accompanied by other qualities if success is to be achieved. We have all encountered instances of the brilliant scholar who is almost useless as an administrator either because he lacks the power of decision, or because he doesn't know how to deal with other human beings, or because he cannot bend his brilliant mind to the common-sense solution of practical problems. Similarly some of the most brilliant administrators have been almost wholly uneducated in an academic sense. The school failures frequently make good in after life, whilst the winners of scholarships as frequently achieve little.

For this reason less and less reliance is placed on competitive written examinations as a means of selecting candidates for the public service. The great advantage of the examination system is that it is proof against wire-pulling and nepotism. The examiners don't usually even know the names of the candidates whose papers they correct. When reliance is placed more on an interview and records of past achievements, there is, theoretically at any rate, a danger that selectors will be influenced by having known the candidate's father or having been at the school he was at. The only answer to that is to be careful in the

selection of the selectors. Anyone who is likely to have his opinion swayed—even an inch—by extraneous and personal considerations is unfit to sit on a Selection Board.

Another “charge” sometimes brought against the Selection Board system is that a board is liable to be influenced too much by good manners or “polish” and that the candidate who has the gift of the gab is more likely to impress than the “strong silent man”. As a Scot friend of mine put it to me: “Many of my compatriots who have reached high positions in government service would have been rejected as ‘uncouth’ by any Selection Board when they were young.”

Talking of Selection Boards reminds me of a cheering incident that occurred a few years ago when I was sitting on such a Board with Colonel Sir ——— of a famous Scottish regiment acting as chairman. We were interviewing young university men for appointment to executive posts at Scotland Yard and a nice, well set-up young man was before us who, I knew from his papers, came from a very military family. I asked him whether his parents had wanted him to go into the Army, and he said they had. “Would you mind telling the Board,” I said, “why you decided not to?” “Certainly, sir,” he replied, “I have lived all my life amongst soldiers. Not only my father but my uncles and most of my relations are soldiers and I have come to the conclusion they were rather a narrow-minded lot.” “Thank you very much,” I said. “Now Colonel Sir ———, perhaps you’d like to ask him some questions.” The poor lad blushed deeply but we assured him that we had enjoyed the incident and no harm had been done. Needless to say I would not have asked the question if I had not known that the good colonel had an efficient sense of humour.

And that brings to mind another pleasing episode “featuring” a Selection Board and the same Colonel Sir ———. He was chairman of a board selecting police officers for promotion and was looking through the record of the candidate under examination. “I see,” he said, “that you were born in 1902 and that before that you were a plumber.”

No one who knows it would, I think, claim any approach to perfection for the Scotland Yard organization. Much of it is rather the accident of history than the result of scientific design. Also, in recent years at any rate, the special interests and qualities of certain individuals have had a noticeable influence on the general scheme.

Ideally, of course, an office or department is “organized” by the

division of the work into branches, sections or "lumps" in such a way that each of the lumps includes topics which are naturally and obviously associated with one another. The dividing lines between the lumps should be as clear and easily remembered as possible and it is an advantage if each of the groups can be described in a word or two, e.g. "Traffic", "Crime" and so forth.

There should also be of course a rough similarity in the size of the lumps measured in terms of responsibility. The head of lump A. should not be asked to carry a burden a great deal heavier than that assigned to B., that is assuming of course that the grading of the two heads is the same and that they are each responsible direct to the top.

It is almost inconceivable that the work of any office or department should lend itself to sub-division in such a way that all these conditions are precisely fulfilled. There must always be a certain amount of compromise. But, allowing for that necessity, the object should be to make the pattern correspond with the work and fit the people into it, rather than to modify the pattern according to the peculiar attainments, skill or experience of individuals.

Here again there must be an element of compromise, and that element is very much in evidence at the H.Q. of the Metropolitan Police. The work divides itself into certain obvious compartments, but if the division were made to follow entirely logical lines the resulting scheme would lack balance as the burdens would be unequal. Lord Trenchard recognized this when he applied his mind to the problem soon after his appointment as Commissioner. No one would accuse him of shrinking from drastic action when he thought it necessary. Opposition and obstacles rather stimulated him than otherwise. But after much talk—striding round and swinging his keys—he reached the conclusion that an entirely "tidy" scheme was not possible—at any rate at that time.

Under the Commissioner of Police there are (as stated earlier) five Assistant Commissioners. This number is fixed by law as a maximum. One of them is known as the Deputy Commissioner and acts as "top man" when the Commissioner is away. There is also a Secretary who has the "status" of an Assistant Commissioner, but is not a policeman and possesses no uniform; and there is a Legal Adviser who, for the purposes of the picture I am presenting at the moment, may be left on one side, to be dealt with later.

With this number of departmental heads available, the division of

work can be either into six lumps if the Deputy Commissioner takes one or into five if he doesn't.

At present he doesn't and the five departments—A., B., C., D. and S.—are briefly known as Administration (A), Traffic (B), Crime (C), Organization (D) and Secretariat (S).

A Polish officer who came to Scotland Yard with a group of his compatriots to study our system spotted the main weakness of this scheme at once. After a brief lecture on the general lay-out he said in rather broken English: "Please may I put question? Please say what difference between Administration and Organization?"

It would not be impossible of course to indicate a (somewhat wobbly) line of demarcation between subjects appropriate to these two heads, but as the actual sub-division now in operation at Scotland Yard is not in fact explicable on any logical basis, there was nothing for the poor lecturer to do but "laugh it off" and hurry on to the next question.

The actual allocation of work as between the five departments will now be briefly described.

The Assistant Commissioner A. (Administration) controls and directs the main activities of the Uniform Force, but, as will be seen later, certain branches of the work carried out by men in uniform are dealt with in B. (Traffic), D. (Organisation) or S. (Secretariat).

Much of the business allotted to A. is of a domestic nature—postings, discipline, police orders, welfare, women police, mounted branch, etc. etc. In addition, certain items of *work* are controlled from this department such as "Pubs and Clubs", betting and gaming, disorderly houses, children and young persons, fortune-telling and complaints against the police. Most of these headings sufficiently explain themselves and need not be further described. A. Department is also responsible for police arrangements on all special occasions, such as processions, jubilees, coronations, state funerals, Lord Mayors' Shows and civil disturbances. The control of traffic on such occasions falls to B. and the two departments co-operate in the preparation of the complicated orders which have to be issued. The planning of a really big show such as a coronation involves several months of hard work by a special team of expert officers.

The functions of B. Department (Traffic) are clear cut and many of them are well known to the public. Traffic Acts and regulations have become with the passage of the years increasingly complicated. It is difficult enough for drivers of vehicles and other road users to keep

track of all the things they must or must not do, but the poor constable is expected to cover the entire field and to hold in his head the whole range of enactments applicable to every sort of vehicle and driver. This important side of police work is directed from B. Department, who also deal with such things as the siting of refuges, roundabouts, one-way streets, diversions, automatic signals, traffic signs, road works, parking places and the licensing and inspection of cabs. Every accident which occurs, if reported—as it should be—to the police is the subject of a long report designed to indicate the “causation” and whether any offence has been committed.

C. Department is the Headquarters of the C.I.D. It was not my intention when I started on the compilation of this record to devote much space to that side of the work of Scotland Yard for which it is most famous, that is to say of course, crime detection. Such a mass of literature exists already. Many of our most sensational criminals have become, if not heroes, at least historical national characters. Many of our best detectives have recounted their adventures and experiences. Every aspect—the crimes themselves, the circumstances and the motives, the investigations and detections, the trials and the punishments—have been exhaustively presented to the public in literary form. A mere glance at the Scotland Yard library (which is far from complete) is sufficient to give an idea of the voracity of the public appetite for this form of nourishment.

I felt therefore somewhat apprehensive that any contribution I might make could only add one more ripple to the ocean. The actual investigation of crime has never come within the purview of my duties and I am conscious of having been frequently a grave disappointment to my friends who have expected me to give them up-to-date dope on the latest murder and have found me sometimes less well-informed than the average keen newspaper reader.

However it may well be that a book which includes the words “Scotland Yard” in its title would be regarded as almost fraudulent unless it devoted at least some of its pages to the activities which have given the Yard such a unique position in so many widely-distributed minds.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the Criminal Investigation Department is its youth, that is to say the small length of its life. The birth date of the Metropolitan Police was, as everyone knows, 1829, but the C.I.D. did not really take shape until nearly fifty years later (1878).

The Bow Street Runners had gone on running until 1839 but their claim to be in any real sense the forefathers of the modern investigators of crime is a slender one. Their numbers were so small, their efficiency so low and their integrity so meagre that history rather flatters them in remembering their existence at all. Dickens wrote them off with scathing finality in one sentence: "Although as a preventive police they were utterly ineffective and as a detective police they were loose and uncertain in their operations, they remain with some people a superstition to the present day."

Public suspicion of the re-organized Metropolitan Police even in uniform was still strong at the time when the Bow Street Runners were passing away, and it took a minor disaster to scare the population into realization that a police force compelled to exist almost wholly in uniform, whether on duty or off duty, was grievously handicapped. The occurrence which produced the necessary shock was the explosion by the Fenians of a barrel of gunpowder outside the Clerkenwell House of Detention in December 1867, causing much damage and killing a number of people. One of the things which emerged from the subsequent investigation was the inadequacy of the detective Force of London. A "detective branch", as it was called, consisting of two inspectors and six sergeants, had been grudgingly authorized in 1842, and this number had been increased to fifteen by 1867. But it was not till 1878 that a separate detective Force (with special rates of pay) known as the Criminal Investigation Department was set up under a "Director of Criminal Investigation" with its headquarters at Scotland Yard and detective staffs in all Divisions.

Since that time the C.I.D. has passed through various vicissitudes. It has borne the brunt of criticism, ridicule and abuse, but in spite of temporary setbacks it has steadily gained ground in public esteem and acquired a remarkable reputation both in this country and throughout the world.

Two main lines of criticism have emerged from time to time and will no doubt do so again. One is what is often called "Third degree" and the other is the employment of "*agents provocateurs*". A long treatise could be written on either of these topics and anyone who is interested can find them exhaustively discussed in various official reports—notably that of the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure (1928-9). It is entirely healthy that public opinion should be sensitive on such points. Long may they remain so. But it has also to be borne in mind that criminals are enemies and that if the

hands of those we depute to fight them are too tightly tied, results may be correspondingly disappointing. We should never have won the world war without the bombing of U-boat bases and industrial centres, and in our domestic war against crime it is possible to carry consideration for the feelings of the enemy too far.

"Third degree" is defined in one of my dictionaries as "severe examination or treatment of prisoners by police to extort an admission (chiefly U.S.A.)." (The words in parenthesis can be read as an accusation, though I prefer to read them as meaning only that the expression "Third degree" has more currency in the States than it has in this country.) Anyway the definition strikes me as a good one as it covers everything from rubber truncheons and torture to the mildly persuasive methods of persistent questioning.

No sane person presumably suspects the police of this country nowadays of employing rubber truncheon methods or any other methods remotely approaching them, and the only question that can arise is whether in their search for information they ever apply undue or unfair verbal pressure. Justice depends on truth and truth is information. Without information justice cannot be done. It is the duty of police to secure information for courts of justice and elaborate precautions exist for the protection of persons in custody from any excess of police zeal in questioning them. The famous "Judges' rules" on "statements by persons suspected of crime or by prisoners in police custody" have all the sacredness of legal enactments though they have no actual legal force. They protect the rights of the citizen in the fullest possible way. After an exhaustive examination the Royal Commission of 1928-9 declared themselves satisfied that generally speaking the spirit of the rules was faithfully observed. It is common enough for prisoners or their legal representatives to allege undue police pressure when a damaging admission has been made, but consistent failure to substantiate such allegations is a fair indication that in fact the police exercise the greatest restraint in this matter.

The French term "*agent provocateur*" is presumably used because there is no very satisfactory English equivalent. For present purposes it may be perhaps defined as a person who provokes, incites or tempts another person to commit an offence with the object of securing evidence on which a charge may be based. Superficially such action is as "un-English" as the term applied to the person who employs it. It isn't cricket; it's hitting below the belt—and all that. And yet there are circumstances in which something very nearly approaching

it may be justified and necessary for the protection of the public. The Royal Commission went into this question at some length. They found all police witnesses in agreement that anything in the nature of incitement to commit crime must be emphatically ruled out. But they admitted that circumstances sometimes justify taking steps which amount to the laying of a trap for a persistent wrong-doer when evidence cannot be obtained in any other way. One example they gave was that of the fortune-teller who batted on innocent girls in a fraudulent manner. As no third party could be present the only way of securing the necessary evidence is by sending an officer in plain clothes, or an agent, to have his or her fortune told. There is little difference in principle between this sort of procedure and the common practice of entrapping the petty pilferer who crops up from time to time in offices and factories. Such a person is a public nuisance and the only way to catch him (or her) may be to lay some sort of trap.

The word "crime" means different things according to the context in which it is used. Technically it includes any violation of the law from murder to jumping a traffic light. But the vast number of petty offences which can be committed in our highly-controlled existence are no concern of the C.I.D., who restrict their activities to the more serious crimes, usually those known as "indictable".

The bulk of such crimes relate to property-stealing in all its forms, frauds, embezzlements, swindling, confidence tricks, forgery, coining, receiving, and so forth. Other major crimes dealt with include murder, bigamy, crimes of violence and rape.

The equipment of a modern C.I.D. officer is formidable. Behind him in all his work is the whole complex departmental organization based on Scotland Yard. In himself are—or should be—qualifications of a high order. An efficient officer must be physically and mentally tough, he must know quite a lot of law, must be able to type, should be able to write shorthand, should have well-developed powers of observation, should know all the "haunts" in his area, should have a good memory for faces, should have the power of expressing himself clearly and concisely in writing, should be a "good witness", and should have a fair knowledge of book-keeping and accountancy.

The organization which stands behind him, any item of which he can call to his aid at short notice, is mainly based on Scotland Yard, though certain types of aid are available to him locally. If he wants

information about individual criminals or suspects, the Criminal Record Office and Finger-print Department may be able to help him. If he wants human help—as for instance to surround a building—the telephone will bring reinforcements in a very short time. He can by ringing 999 communicate information to all stations and all cars in the District or to other Forces in a few minutes. If he wants scientific help, he has access to the Laboratory or the Photographic branch. If he needs the latest information as to the incidence of crime in his area, he will find maps both at Headquarters and in his own Division which will show him where things have happened, on what days of the week and at what time of day.

The C.I.D. Force of London—normally nearly 1,400 men, including Special Branch—is distributed over the whole of the Metropolitan Police District. The local officers deal with the more ordinary types of crime, but at the Yard itself there is a strong body of experienced officers in a branch known as C.I., or “Central”. This branch takes on the direction—and to some extent the conduct—of the more serious or complicated crimes and those requiring specialized expertness. Generally speaking, specialization is not carried very far. We don’t in this country go in for murder squads, vice squads and so forth, but quite naturally individual officers develop special capacities and if an important case of, for example, share-pushing, forgery or embezzlement comes along it will probably be entrusted to one of the C.I. men who has already shown his skill in that particular type of investigation.

A single investigation sometimes spreads over a very long period. There was a fraud case a few years ago which engaged the whole time of two Scotland Yard officers for ten months. The documents and other material which had to be examined in order to secure the necessary evidence were so voluminous that a fairly large room had to be specially assigned to them. It is one thing to know for a certainty that a swindle has been committed but it is quite another thing to be able to produce the evidence and to present it to the court in a form which will convince a jury without hopelessly confusing their minds.

“Central” also controls the famous Flying Squad. A fleet of fast cars which look as much as possible like ordinary private vehicles, and are manned by experienced officers who have shown their all-round capacity and readiness to take risks, is kept ready at Headquarters to take the road at a moment’s notice. “Information received” may indicate that a gang of warehouse-breakers or jewel thieves are busy and if the probable point of departure or objective is known or

surmised, an attempt will be made to establish contact. This sort of job may lead to one of those break-neck chases which have been so often described. Much of course depends on the skill of the driver. In the earlier stages he must keep the quarry in sight without being seen. Then when the chase starts he must be prepared to attain high speeds—perhaps in narrow congested streets—without endangering innocent passers-by. If necessary, he must be prepared to ram the pursued car without damaging his own crew, and he must be able to take his part in the general mix-up which is likely to follow, or give chase to an escaping criminal.

Only a very small proportion of the flying squad's sorties of course are of this exciting nature. More often they cruise round with their "eyes skinned" for suspicious behaviour. They have the numbers of all recently-stolen cars with them and usually they carry other bits and pieces of information which may be useful.

Many pages could be written on this and other activities of the "Central" branch. But as much of the work of this branch has already received wide publicity in Press and published memoirs, I need not go into further details except to say that here are located the chief inspectors who hold themselves in readiness to travel at short notice to the investigation of a provincial murder or major fraud case, if the local Chief Constable calls for such aid.

Talking of murder, it is a curious fact that the figure year by year remains remarkably constant. When a few sensational front-page murders occur within a short time, people are liable to conclude that things have got to a "pretty pass". Actually it is a safe bet that in any one year the number of murders in London will lie somewhere between twenty-five and thirty-five.

"Crime waves" too come and go, frequently more in imagination than in fact. A few bold raids on fashionable jewellers, a few watchmen bound and gagged, attract Press and public attention and conjure up visions of a dangerous up-surge of violence which is often not corroborated by cold dry statistics.

Two other branches of C. Department may be briefly referred to, namely the Finger-print branch and the Criminal Record Office. Most people are familiar with the basic fact that no two sets of finger-prints can be alike, but how exactly this convenient circumstance is employed in identifying criminals is often not clearly understood. Most people know also, if they are readers of detective stories, that Scotland Yard holds voluminous records of current criminals, but here

again the various ways in which these records are utilized is less generally understood.

The use of finger-prints as an aid to crime detection and the identification of criminals or suspects is now fairly general throughout the world, and, as in the case of other important features of police work, the Metropolitan Force can claim most of the credit as regards both initiation and subsequent development.

That every person's finger-prints are unique, inimitable and remain unchanged throughout life has been realized for a long time. The finger-print has been utilized, probably for centuries, in certain eastern countries as a substitute for a signature. What is new—i.e. only forty-six years old—is the method of classification. It is little use to collect the finger-prints of half a million criminals unless you can find the one you want when you want it—and quickly. To achieve this, it was necessary to devise a means by which classification and sub-classification could be carried so far that only a small number would have to be examined to find the one wanted. Mr. Henry (afterwards Sir Edward Henry) whilst Inspector-General of Police, Bengal, devised such a scheme in 1898 and brought it to London when he was appointed Assistant Commissioner in 1901. (He became Commissioner in 1903.)

Finger-print experts speak a language of their own. They talk of whorls, loops, arches, composites and accidentals. These are their ways of describing the curiously involved convolutions of the minute lines we carry about on the skin of our hands. Criminals have often tried to scrape off these tell-tale lines, but they form themselves again unchanged in a short time. Which is "just too bad".

The main object of the finger-print collection is not, as is frequently supposed, to identify criminals from the prints they sometimes leave behind them on the busted safe, the door knobs of the burgled house, the handle of the murderer's knife or the trigger of the pistol. That is *one* function. Articles taken from "scenes of crime"—from bottles and drinking glasses to motor-cars and window-frames—are brought daily to the Yard or photographed *in situ* for expert examination. An index known as the "scenes of crime index" is maintained. It contains marks found which could not at the time be identified, usually because the criminal had not previously achieved the distinction of having his prints recorded in the Yard's main collection.

This is a highly important function and leads to the eventual identification of a number of offenders and the "clearing up" of many crimes.

But the real purpose for which finger-prints were started and are now so widely used is to identify persons arrested for crime or suspected of crime. It is obviously essential for police and courts, when they have a person before them, to know who he is and all about him. Finger-prints enable the police to turn up his full record no matter where the arrest takes place and no matter what steps he takes to conceal his identity—by aliases and so forth.

The finger-print collection acts as a sort of index to the criminal records. It tells the police who the man is and the records held in the "Criminal Record Offices" contain all that is known about him—what crimes he has committed and where, what methods he has employed, what aliases he has used, who his associates are and what sentences he has undergone.

An important feature of the Criminal Record Office (C.R.O.) is the method index. Most criminals are curiously lacking in imagination. I remember years ago a Scottish friend of mine saying of one of our colleagues—a statistician: "He has a certain shrewd cunning in dealing with statistics but not a vestige of intelligence." The same might be said of the majority of criminals. They have a certain shrewd cunning in carrying out a particular crime but not a vestige of intelligence—or imagination. The "master minds" are very scarce. There are of course in the "higher grades"—the confidence tricksters and fraudsters—a few pretty clever and ingenious people. Even they—or many of them—show a remarkable lack of originality at times. They are more likely to exploit one of the traditional tricks, which most people must have heard of, than to think up a fresh one for themselves.

But, broadly speaking, criminals, especially thieves, develop a particular technique and stick to it. This is a convenient state of affairs for the police. It makes it possible for them often to guess—with varying degrees of certainty of course—which of their "clients" is most likely to be responsible for any particular crime. They study the details. What was the method of approach? Was the entry by breaking locks, opening windows, scaling ladders, cutting glass panels, skeleton keys or "bodily pressure"? What was taken? Most thieves have their special lines. Some go for jewellery, others for furs, or it may be cigarettes, clothing, rationed goods, furniture or what not. How did they get the stuff away? Did they eat or drink on the premises? Did they throw everything about or go straight to their objective? The nature of the premises also gives a line. Some thieves

go for warehouses, others for shops, others for houses—country houses, town houses, big houses, little houses—others for flats. And so on and so forth. All these and other particulars are to be found in the method index, and the skilled searcher can tell in a very short time that a particular job was probably done by a particular thief, or by one of a small number who all adopt a similar technique.

Quite often an experienced officer can tell from his memory. Memories develop remarkably, not only for methods employed but also for finger-prints. A good finger-print officer can often recognize a print without looking at the collection.

When the answer given by the *modus operandi* index is that the offender sought is likely to be one of, say, six or eight or ten, then "discreet inquiries" and a process of elimination may lead the investigating officer to an eventual identification.

Another branch of the C.R.O. deals with property lost or stolen. People who are robbed are liable to be more interested in getting their things back than in the apprehension of the thief, but anyone who stops to think for a moment will realize what an enormous task the police have in trying to trace and identify the vast amount of miscellaneous property lost and recovered. Much of it is quite unidentifiable anyway, and thieves are quick to break up jewellery or destroy evidences of identification where possible. Nevertheless a large amount of property is in fact traced, frequently at great distances from the place where it was stolen.

Some years ago a thief had the cheek to take a week-end suitcase out of my car when it was standing within the precincts of Scotland Yard itself. This amused other people more than it did me. However, no one was to blame. A constable is always on duty outside the building, but he has a largish area to cover and is constantly distracted by callers, parking cars and so forth. However, I got all my things back within a couple of days. How the C.I.D. got on to the thief I don't remember, but I know they found him comfortably in bed wearing my pyjamas. "What made you take that suitcase from Scotland Yard?" they asked. "What! That one? Blimy, was that Scotland Yard? I thought it was the back of some government offices. No wonder you've come so quick. Just my bleedin' luck."

Another aid to the identification of criminals in the C.R.O. is a collection of photograph albums. These are useful in helping visitors to spot criminals whom they have seen. A room is provided where

they can look through the photographs of those likely to have committed the crime in which they are interested.

A friend of mine encountered a couple of confidence tricksters when he was staying at a Riviera hotel before the war. They each made his acquaintance separately in that casual accidental way these gentlemen adopt. They were strangers to one another of course. Charming companions he found them, who knew where to find the best of everything and even secured invitations for themselves and him to a party in one of H.M. ships lying at anchor near-by. However, my friend was a pretty astute person and he quickly began to suspect they were preparing the ground for some sort of confidence trick effort. This added spice to the entertainment for him and he decided to lead them gently on. Then quite suddenly, when he was still considering whether he should notify the local police, his two acquaintances disappeared across the frontier into Italy. As soon as he got home my friend came to tell me of his encounter. I handed him on to C.I.D. Central who, on hearing a brief description of the suspects, showed him a couple of photographs. "What about those two?" They were, as he thought, well known international confidence tricksters who were prepared to spend freely when they thought they had a likely customer in tow. The C.I.D. were glad to know where these two crooks were operating at the moment.

Also under the control of the Assistant Commissioner C. is the Special Branch, whose functions briefly are to "keep an eye" on subversive elements, to protect members of the Royal Family or any other persons whose positions may make them possible objects of attack by lunatics or evilly disposed persons, to carry out inquiries in naturalization cases and, in war-time, to advise and assist in those obscure activities connected with national security about which wise men do not ask questions.

The branch came into existence in the early 1880's, in consequence of the Fenian outrages in London. The necessity for any Government to keep itself informed of the plans and purposes of persons contemplating violence for political ends is obvious enough. The collection of such information is one of the many responsibilities of the Special Branch. This is the nearest approach we make in this country to a political police—a mere handful of men collecting information. I mentioned this fact in a lecture to German prisoners and they seemed to have great difficulty in swallowing it. When question-time came it was clear that they suspected me of lying to them. "Does the

lecturer expect us to believe, etc. etc. . . . ?” Not only Germans but the nationals of many other countries might find similar difficulty. How far I eventually convinced them I cannot of course say, but I was told that they talked a lot about this astonishing state of affairs in their discussion groups the next day.

Before leaving C. Department, mention should be made of the Metropolitan Police Laboratory—now at Hendon and shortly to be moved to Scotland Yard itself. The primary function of the Laboratory is the investigation of crime or suspected crime and for this reason its activities come under the general—somewhat long-range—control of the Assistant Commissioner C.

Until recent times, Police Forces in this country, including the Metropolitan Force, when they required the sort of advice or assistance that could only be given by persons fully qualified in some branch of science, obtained the services of recognized outside experts. In London, for example, for many years Sir Bernard Spilsbury used to be called in quite frequently to advise, and often to give evidence, in murder cases. Sir Bernard (who has now retired from active work of this kind) was not only an eminent pathologist; he had also acquired an unequalled fund of experience in this field and was an excellent witness. Some cynic said many years ago that there are liars, damned liars and expert witnesses. But that is not the kind of expert witness the police need. What they must have is a witness who will present scientific facts in a manner intelligible to the lay mind, whose opinion will be strictly objective, based on purely scientific examination and knowledge and who will present his conclusions without the smallest bias. If his conclusions cast doubt on the guilt of an arrested person or suggest the possibility of innocence, he must stand by these conclusions as doggedly as he would stand by evidence of guilt. Perhaps that should all go without saying, but I have good reason for knowing that it is not always believed.

For the “make up” of a good expert witness something more than knowledge and honesty is required. Evidence given by the most scrupulously honest person may be unconvincing or even become valueless, if the expert witness has not the mental alertness and verbal agility to stand up against the attacks of clever lawyers. The business of the cross-examining counsel is to bowl out the expert witness if he can. Scientific erudition and honesty of purpose may not in themselves suffice to save the expert’s wicket if he has no aptitude also for the witness-box game.

Pathologists who specialize in murders, suicides and other crimes of violence must necessarily soon become case-hardened to what ordinary mortals would regard as disgusting. This applies no doubt in a lesser degree to the normal practice of medicine, but the pathologist dealing with forensic medicine becomes sometimes so inured to the loathsome that he quite overlooks the possibility of other people's reactions. I have heard of large tough policemen fainting at a lecture given by Sir Bernard Spilsbury though he confined himself to the verbal description of cases without the accompaniment of specimens or pictures.

Some years ago I was talking to a senior C.I.D. officer who had done a lot of work of this kind and I asked him whether he found it at all unpleasant at the start. "Yes, sir, I did indeed," he said. "I well remember my first case with Sir Bernard. It was a particularly unpleasant corpse, an exhumation case. I walked into the room and there it was all laid out ready for examination. I was terribly afraid I should make a fool of myself, which would never do for a C.I.D. officer, so I put on a cigarette and tried to think of something else. After a while Sir Bernard came in. He sniffed twice, looked round the room and said: "You mustn't smoke, please, Johnson. I can't smell the smells I want to smell." He then bent down over the corpse and sniffed away as if it was a rose garden."

Pathologists were not the only kind of outside scientists employed by the police. The services also of chemists, physicists, toxicologists, ballistic experts and others were required from time to time and, in London, the arrangement did not work too badly as there was seldom any difficulty in securing the assistance of men who were already accepted as eminent in their particular branch of science. Evidence given by such men was naturally treated with respect in the courts.

It was in the provinces that difficulty was more liable to arise. Experts might not be readily accessible and police had either to get the examinations done at some distant laboratory or rely on the services of non-specialists. For this reason the earliest developments in the scientific side of crime detection occurred outside London and it was not until Lord Trenchard's Commissionership that the decision was taken to set up a police laboratory in the Metropolitan Police District. Lord Trenchard took the view that it was not sufficient for the police to have access to eminent scientists for assistance in particular cases. This arrangement did little to develop amongst police officers a sufficient

knowledge of what science could do for them both in the investigation of crime and in other branches of their work. To put science in its proper place in the modern police organization it was, he felt, necessary to have a small scientific staff devoting their whole time to such matters. They would not only give direct assistance to the C.I.D. in actual cases, but would also, by lectures, demonstrations, exhibitions and so forth, give the Force as a whole a new awareness of the many directions in which science could assist them. It was hoped also that this scientific staff would keep in touch with developments abroad and would carry out original researches.

The Metropolitan Police Laboratory was opened at Hendon in 1935 and a system of regional laboratories covering the rest of the country has since then come into existence under the control of the Home Office.

I will not attempt to describe in detail the work which goes on in these institutions. A little learning is indeed a dangerous thing in this department of work and my learning is so little that I should inevitably drop some frightful scientific brick before getting very far.

A visitor, I remember, some years ago, after seeing round the Hendon Laboratory, summing up his impressions, said: "My word, they do have fun in these places." That's one way of looking at it. The work must be absorbing and of great interest, but not quite my idea of fun. To the expert no doubt each case is just a scientific problem for which a solution must be found. Though many of the specimens reaching the laboratory relate to some human—or sub-human—drama of death or violence—murder, suicide, rape, abortion, assault, and so forth—the investigator can hardly be expected to spend much thought or sympathy on the emotional aspects of the sad stories which he helps to reconstruct or of the human tragedies into which he probes. The poor man would be wringing his hands or mopping his eyes all day if he were to allow his imagination to play on the mental and physical sufferings which have reached their climax in the criminal act he has to elucidate. To the police scientist the examination of human organs to detect traces of poison is no more or less dramatic than the analysis of the town water supply to detect impurities is to the public analyst.

By no means all of the investigations undertaken relate to "sensational" crimes. There is plenty of light relief. Whilst in one room the blood-stained sheets from a front-page murder may be under examination, in another the dust from a thief's clothes may be receiving

attention or a trap for catching the petty larcenist may be in course of preparation.

One impression the visitor is likely to bring away with him from a police laboratory is that the criminal who is unlucky enough to have his crime investigated at one of these places is up against a formidable array of appliances and skill. The forger or cooker of documents may not realize that his best efforts are likely to be revealed by the ultra-violet lamp. The man who uses a pistol may have a shock when he finds that science can demonstrate the impossibility of the bullet he has fired having been fired by any other pistol than his.

The branches of science which contribute to these investigations are biology, pathology, chemistry and physics. There is no sharp dividing line between them. They overlap one another to some extent and as it is hardly reasonable to maintain at each laboratory first-class authorities in all four branches, there has been some difference of opinion as to the best way of dealing with the position. However, so far as London is concerned, the problem is not difficult. The team employed can tackle the great majority of conundrums presented to it and if they find themselves confronted with something outside their range, they can always call in outside help.

The Organization Department (D) is a fairly modern innovation. It was set up by Lord Trenchard with the primary object of working out new methods and ideas. Senior officers who have a largish block of day-to-day business to transact get few opportunities of thinking out new plans and initiating improvements. The constant stream of people who have to be seen and of papers that have to be dealt with (the great "tyranny of bumf"), to say nothing of the attentions of that supreme interrupter the telephone, produce an atmosphere that is not conducive to creative thought. In this respect police work is no different from any other administrative work except that urgency is rather the rule than the exception. Decisions are liable to be wanted at once and it is usually unsafe to put aside current business in order to concentrate for a day or two on some problem which needs continuous and uninterrupted thought.

Lord Trenchard saw that there were a number of problems which needed tackling and which ought to have been tackled earlier and he came to the conclusion that the only way of bringing Metropolitan Police methods up-to-date quickly and keeping them so, was to create a small branch whose special function would be to work out schemes and make changes and adjustments in the machine from time

to time. It had to have the necessary authority and gun-power to override objections and silence obstructionists; so he put it in charge of an Assistant Commissioner. At the same time he felt that the flow of new ideas might be intermittent and that it might not be easy even for a small department to occupy itself solely and indefinitely on purely creative effort. Partly for this reason and partly perhaps to "balance the loads", he assigned a certain number of current subjects to the Organization Department. He was no doubt also influenced by the consideration that in certain matters the re-organizers would be constantly treading on the toes of the administrators unless some topics, normally administrative, were handed over completely to the re-organizers.

One of the most important items in his programme of development concerned police buildings. As a result mainly of successive economy "drives", from the Geddes era onwards, police buildings—both Stations and Section Houses—had become woefully out of date. To this day (because the Trenchard programme was interrupted before completion by the outbreak of war) there are police stations still lighted by gas and some of the quarters occupied by men are truly archaic.

Buildings therefore were one of the items allotted to the Organization Department. So also were Communications, no doubt because of their intimate connection with the police-box system and the rapid developments taking place in wireless telegraphy and telephony. The inclusion of recruitment in the D. group seems to have been due more to considerations of personnel and was not intended to be permanent, but as some wag said: "There is nothing so permanent as the provisional," and the arrangement still subsists.

The functions of S. Department under the Secretary are to maintain the "Common Services"—the Registry, Typing Branch, Statistics and Accounts Branch—and, as stated already, to look after a number of miscellaneous subjects which might under a more logical arrangement be assigned to Administration. In addition to supervising these activities, the Secretary is responsible for recruiting and maintaining the civil staff employed both in his own department and in the other parts of the office and he is supposed to exercise a general co-ordinating function and to deal with any matters not specially appropriate to one of the other four departments.

The staff of S. Department is entirely "civil"—not referring to their manners, but civil as opposed to police—whereas in the other

departments police and civil staff are mixed up. This needs a little explaining and the explanation can hardly be given without touching on a question which has given rise to intermittent controversy at Scotland Yard for a great number of years. Just as in the War Office there are soldiers and civilians working side by side, in the Admiralty sailors and civilians, and in the Air Ministry airmen and civilians, so at Scotland Yard we find policemen and civilians. The great question—which has never been settled in any final sort of way—is what sort of work is best done by policemen and what sort by civilians.

It may be that on this subject only an outsider could give an entirely unbiased and impartial judgment, and that anyone who, like myself, has taken an active part in the controversy, must necessarily remain prejudiced even though no longer personally involved.

I have, however, the advantage over any outsider of knowing both sides of the argument by heart as it were and I will do my best to produce them as honestly and impartially as in me lies.

Perhaps the simplest thing is to state the case as it would be stated by "extremists" on either side, that is to say firstly by those who hold that there is no place in the Scotland Yard organization for *any civilians* and secondly by those who feel that the great bulk of the Scotland Yard work is not appropriate to policemen and could be better, more efficiently and more economically done by civilians. (In all this I am referring, of course, to peace-time conditions and not to the abnormal situation created by war.)

The extreme "anti-civilians" point out that the existence of a large civil staff at headquarters is a feature peculiar to the Metropolitan Police. Broadly speaking provincial Forces have not found it necessary or desirable to set up a civil staff organization and have dealt with their administrative and office work quite efficiently by bringing in policemen who have the right kind of mental equipment and education. The Metropolitan Force is larger of course than any provincial Force but there is no fundamental difference in the sort of administrative and clerical jobs which have to be done, and what is sauce for the small goose is sauce for the large gander.

They argue further that people who have never actually done police work, who have never lived the lives lived by policemen, who have not been through the hard school of beats, patrols and night duty, cannot be fit persons to direct police activities and settle questions which vitally concern the day-to-day life of police officers. A wholly office existence and training is liable, they say, to develop an academic and

unpractical outlook unsuitable for the direction of a service which has an essentially practical task to perform and which involves continual contacts with all sorts and conditions of men. The best training for police administration is police work, and an insight into administrative matters as they present themselves in the headquarters offices is valuable experience for a police officer who aspires to higher ranks.

Another point is that it is good for a Force to have a certain proportion of "sheltered" jobs available for some of those who have faced the rigours of outdoor police duty for a number of years and for those who on account of some minor injury or physical disability (such as failing eyesight or hearing) are no longer entirely suitable for normal duties.

Lastly it is contended that the police are a disciplined Force more analagous to the Army than to a Government Department. As such they take their orders and directions more naturally from others of their kind, wearing the same uniform, than from a lot of black-coated civilians who are not in any sense police officers themselves and have therefore no natural right to lay down the law in police matters.

The other side of the picture is this. When Peel laid the foundations of the Metropolitan Police in 1829—and it is generally agreed now that they were well and truly laid—the one point he was anxious to stress above all others was its civilian—i.e. non-military—character. One of his first two Commissioners was, it is true, a military man, but the other was a lawyer. They both became Justices of the Peace (as the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners now are) and the staff allotted to them consisted solely of "Clerks"—a term which in those days had a somewhat wider and more distinguished connotation than is usual nowadays.* No police officers were included in the Commissioner's original staff and it is not very clear when or why their importation began. One of the reasons, in later years at any rate, was undoubtedly the rigid control exercised by the Home Office over the number and rates of pay of the civil staff at Scotland Yard. If an Assistant Commissioner found himself short of staff in his office he knew that there would be difficulties and delays in securing civilians and awkward questions would be asked. But there was nothing to prevent his bringing in a few police officers to "lend a hand for a time" and many of the loans developed into permanencies.

* It still survives in such titles as Clerk of Parliaments, Clerk of the House of Commons, Clerk of the London County Council, Clerk of the Privy Council, Clerks of the Peace, etc.

Police officers are recruited for brawn rather than brain, even more so in the past than now. Chest measurements, height and general physical development played a much more important part in the business of selection than scholastic attainments, the minimum standard for which was definitely low. Furthermore their conditions of service, with a pension obtainable after twenty-five years, were based on the idea that a man could not reasonably be expected to stand up to the rigours of exposure in all weather and periodical "tours" of night duty after the age of about forty-five to fifty. The ordinary Civil Servant (and the staff at Scotland Yard have similar conditions of service) cannot take a pension until he is sixty unless his health breaks down completely.

From this point of view it is not easy to justify the existence at Scotland Yard of several hundred fit and strong policemen doing purely sedentary work with regular government department hours and no night or Sunday duties. Many of them come in fairly young and remain until they are forty-five to fifty, then leave with quite a good pension and enough strength and energy to start again on a fresh job.

Very little of the work at Scotland Yard calls for previous practical experience as a police officer. How otherwise could the numerous appointments of soldiers, sailors, airmen and lawyers to senior positions be justified? On the contrary, it may well be, as some hold, that those whose early training and experience have been in a quite different field bring a wider outlook and a more detached point of view to bear on police problems, and that for this sort of work police training is rather a drawback than an advantage.

Everything done at Scotland Yard, every letter written and every direction or order given, is in theory by the Commissioner's direction. The office is "the Commissioner's Office" and the staff is the Commissioner's staff. Official letters start with the phrase "I am directed by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis . . ." and though directions to the Force do not include these sacred words, the principle remains and is well understood. It doesn't matter in the least to the police officer in the Station what sort of person has originated or signed the direction he receives from the Head Office. It is the Commissioner's direction and whether the person writing it or signing it (for the Commissioner) wears a black coat or a blue uniform is a matter of no consequence.

In some of the branches at H.Q. where police are employed the

officers are liable to come and go fairly frequently. A man comes in perhaps as an inspector and before he has had time really to learn the job he gets promotion to Sub-Divisional Inspector and goes away again. Tradition, continuity and "expertize" are thus difficult to maintain. Members of the civil staff become recognized experts on branches of police law and administration, many of which are highly complicated. One man is *the* authority on "pubs and clubs" (a tricky and "dangerous" topic), another on traffic law, another on firearms and so on and so forth. They become known **by** name in the Force and officers come to see them or ring them up when they want advice. They lecture also to police audiences in promotion courses and at the College, and seldom can the officers discover a conundrum which the civil staff lecturer cannot answer, though they have on occasions exercised much ingenuity in trying to do so.

The system of recruitment of the civil staff is designed to secure the best products of the Universities and the Secondary Schools. It does not depend on a written examination though a fairly high standard of education is insisted upon. The point is that they are selected for their fitness to discharge administrative and clerical duties in an office and not—as in the case of the police—for something quite different, which calls for different qualities and attributes.

One of the arguments sometimes put forward—and by quite responsible people—for the employment of police officers in large numbers on such work as finger-prints and criminal records is that they may have at any time to give evidence in court, the suggestion being that the proper giving of evidence is a highly technical and specialized matter for which a police training is essential. There are of course a few general rules to be observed and a few snags to be aware of in the giving of evidence, but 99 out of every 100 of the cases are perfectly straightforward and two hours' instruction would ensure that no mistake would be made.

The idea that there should be a number of sheltered jobs for "tired" police officers or those who have been injured or have developed minor physical defects is certainly a good one, but an ample supply of such jobs is already available without having to fill up the offices at Scotland Yard. A "boot allowance" is paid to officers of all ranks and some humorist suggested that in these days a trouser allowance would be more appropriate, as so many men spend their time—or a great deal of it—sitting in something—in cars, on motor-cycles, in communication rooms and in various kinds of stations and offices.

The strongest argument perhaps for the employment of police officers at Headquarters is that for those who aspire to eventual promotion to high rank the experience may be of some value. It is no doubt desirable, before trying to control any part of a machine, to know something of the workings of the rest of it. Familiarity with some of the Scotland Yard activities is an advantage, but a sufficient acquaintance with most of them can be secured without actually doing the work for years, and if the appointments were only held for a short time and constant changes were made, efficiency would obviously suffer. In fact without a reasonable amount of continuity the office would cease to function. "Attachments" for short periods would of course be possible. A C.I.D. officer might, for example, spend a week or a month in the Finger-prints Branch or the Criminal Record Office with the object of seeing rather than doing the work. He would learn all he needs in the time. The same applies to other branches. The more the senior officers are familiar with the workings of Headquarters the better, but it does not follow that Headquarters itself will benefit by having a lot of its work permanently in the hands of police officers.

Until fairly recently the Lost Property Office, the Public Carriage Office (where the licensing of conductors, drivers and taximen is dealt with) and the office dealing with offences against the Traffic Acts were all manned by police officers and the proposal to hand them over to civilians was hailed by some as revolutionary and disastrous. Needless to say no disaster occurred when the change was made.

The suggestion that only police officers can give orders to police officers is of course founded on a complete misapprehension. In the first place it is not a fact that the police as a whole have any strong feelings on the point. The important thing is that the decision or ruling should be given by someone who "knows his stuff", and when that someone is a civilian the "directed" officer does not bother himself about his exact status. He is much more likely to question a decision given at the Commissioner's Office by a police officer of a rank lower than his own than one given by a civilian whose rank has no definite place in the police hierarchy.

As has been said a thousand times, police are first, last and all the time, civilians themselves. A "disciplined" body to a slightly—but only slightly—greater extent than the staff of a Government Office, but in no sense military or quasi-military, and the military analogy is wholly false.

Sir John Moylan puts it well in his book on Scotland Yard. He says:

"The whole police system is a branch of the civil service, in the broad sense of that term, and any antithesis of police and civilian is a false one. The five hundred or so clerks in the Commissioner's Office, together with the equally numerous clerks, and professional, technical and manual staff employed under the Receiver, form a Metropolitan Police civil service, distinct from the general civil service of the Crown, but organized on similar lines. Not being constables they are not members of the police force, but they are members of the police service and have been an integral part of the Metropolitan police organization since 1829. The police office which Peel established at 4, Whitehall Place consisted of the justices (the Commissioners) and clerks, who formed the Commissioner's staff. Sir Richard Mayne's right-hand man was his chief clerk, Charles Yardley, who, as a member of the old Army Commissariat, had been present at Waterloo.

"No civil service establishment on a comparable footing forms part of the police service elsewhere in England and Wales, because the central or headquarter offices of other Forces are too small to offer scope for an organization on the Scotland Yard scale, and police administration in the counties and boroughs is linked with that of other departments of local administration.

"The functions of civil servants and police at Scotland Yard are to a large extent interchangeable, and civil servants form part of the staffs of each of the four departments presided over by an Assistant Commissioner."

I have left the Legal, or Solicitor's Department to the last, not on account of any lack of importance but because it is outside the general scheme of organization which is not affected by its existence and would be much as it is now if, as in former days, the Commissioner employed the services of an outside firm of solicitors.

This was one of the many growths which Lord Trenchard dug up and examined. There were some strongish arguments, which had successfully held the field until that time, in favour of the old plan. The main one was that police prosecutions might have the appearance of being more impartial if the advocacy were entrusted to an independent lawyer not part of the police department and presumably not therefore so closely controlled by the Commissioner and his staff. But it would be tedious to go into all the pros and cons of the matter.

It is sufficient to record that after examining it with his usual thoroughness, Lord Trenchard came to the conclusion, with the concurrence of the Home Secretary, that Scotland Yard should have its own Legal Department. Its functions are briefly to give legal advice to the Commissioner and any of his staff who need it and to conduct prosecutions of certain kinds, that is to say those in which "legal aid" is deemed necessary and which are not passed on to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The new plan has now been in existence for over ten years and is generally regarded as a success.

To effect the change with due consideration for the firm who had acted for the Commissioner for a great number of years and to get the new organization started on right lines was a tricky business. It was handled (with Lord Trenchard's guidance) by the man appointed as the first holder of the post of Solicitor at Scotland Yard, a position he still holds.

Observing the new plan in action, I have sometimes wondered how the old one ever worked at all. Contacts with the Solicitor himself or his assistants are so close and continuous that even a few flights of stairs are sometimes irksome. The firm previously employed had their offices in the Holborn region.

A legal adviser close at hand is a great help in dealing with the class of cases known as "Complaints against Police". Speed of action is often vital. If there are genuine grounds, if the complainant has suffered a real damage through police error or police negligence, his temperature is likely to be dangerously high, and the sooner the soothing syrup, accompanied by such restitution as may be possible, is administered the better for all concerned.

Quite a few times the Solicitor has come into my room, tossed a letter on the desk and said: "Now then. Laugh that one off if you can." I read some appalling accusation of stupidity or other form of wickedness and, but for the lessons of the past, I might be tempted to indulge in some immediate indignation. But years of experience have taught me never even to begin to form a judgment on the presentation of a case by an aggrieved party. Not only the presentation of the facts but the facts themselves may prove on investigation to be completely inaccurate. It is astonishing how two accounts of the same incident or set of circumstances, both perhaps (not always of course) honest, may differ diametrically, and when this happens it is often far from easy to reach the truth. That the officer should be

stoutly supported unless he can be shown to be at fault is obviously essential. Otherwise lack of confidence would soon destroy zeal and initiative and the Force would incline to play safe. At the same time great damage can be done to police credit if the public gain the impression that the police authorities will never admit error until compelled to do so. Quick investigation, followed by immediate and ample apology if a brick has been dropped, or seems likely to have been dropped, nearly always "turns away wrath".

This brief description of the Scotland Yard organization only purports to be the merest skeleton. Those who want to know more could not do better than refer to Sir John Moylan's book "Scotland Yard". It is getting old now (2nd edition published in 1934), but the changes made since that time have been more in the nature of developments than of fundamental alterations and the great bulk of what is recorded there is as correct now as when it was written.

The Receiver's Office (of which Sir John Moylan was Head for many years) deals with the financial side of the business of the Metropolitan Police. The Receiver is responsible direct to the Home Secretary, and not in any way to the Commissioner of Police. This somewhat curious arrangement has been in operation since 1829, when Sir Robert Peel (in a famous letter which was discovered in our archives about fifteen years ago) prescribed the original organization of the Force.

Theoretically the Commissioner cannot spend a penny of public money without the agreement of the Receiver, and every item of actual expenditure has to be passed by the Receiver or on his behalf by an authorized member of his staff.

The Home Office perform for the Metropolitan Police a similar function to that performed by the Treasury for Government Departments. They give general authorities for expenditure under each separate head and no payment can be made unless it is covered by one of these general authorities or unless a special Home Office sanction is obtained.

The great bulk of the work of examining individual accounts of money spent is carried out in the Commissioner's Office. Every item, however small, is scrutinized to make sure that it is properly verified and in accordance with the regulations. Every week hundreds of pieces of paper containing particulars of expenditure pass from the Divisional Offices to the Commissioner's Office and from the Commissioner's Office to the Receiver's Office. That all sounds very

elaborate no doubt, but when public money is involved, control must be as rigid for the 6d. as for the thousands of pounds. If it were not, if small sums of expenditure were regarded as unimportant and were not watched all the time by people specially trained for the purpose, the cumulative effect would soon become great.

People often say that it is easier to get a million pounds out of the public purse than half a crown, and there is an element of truth in the saying.

If a plan involving large expenditure emerges, the whole affair is settled one way or the other by the "big" men. If it were a Metropolitan Police matter, the Commissioner himself would probably discuss with the Receiver himself and then with the Permanent Head of the Home Office and perhaps the Home Secretary and the plan would be agreed—or not as the case might be. But the half-crown which has been spent and is not clearly covered by any existing authority may have a tedious and troublesome passage. Does it or does it not come within this or that sanction? If not, then are there good grounds for asking for special approval? Would special approval open the door to thousands of other similar half-crowns? If so, is it right and reasonable that it should? The individual who has to wait for his half-crown and knows nothing of these complications gets hot under the collar and talks angrily about red tape.

What people call "red tape" is not of course peculiar to government or to this country. As an American writer dealing with the subject said recently, "All large organizations have red tape. They have to have it as it is the means to the efficient transaction of business. Integrity in transactions is demanded much more completely in government than elsewhere. This accounts for much red tape. We shall have to have it with us always and the more complex our civilization becomes, the more red tape we shall need."

The independent position of the Finance Officer might perhaps be expected to give rise to friction between him and the Commissioner, and no doubt unreasonable niggardliness in a Receiver or unreasonable extravagance in a Commissioner might well bring about an awkward situation. But no such situation has arisen within my recollection for the simple reason that persons appointed to both these positions are liable to be broad-minded and reasonable men. Even Lord Trenchard's ambitious schemes, including such items as the College, the Hendon Laboratory, the four recreation grounds and the extensive re-building programmes, involving altogether the spending

of some millions of pounds (partly met by a special loan) were not opposed by the financial guardians because he carried them with him at every stage and was able to convince them that what he wanted to do was necessary and in the public interest.

In most of the hundreds of rooms ranged along the Scotland Yard corridors a visitor would find police officers or officials engaged in tasks very similar to those to be met in any other large administrative office. To the "naked eye" the detective writing his report on a murder investigation has the same appearance and uses the same tools as the clerk answering an inquiry about the unaccountable disappearance of a maiden aunt. But in a few of the rooms more unusual things would be found happening.

In the map-room, for example, those permitted to investigate (and only, I hasten to say, strictly "business" visits are allowed) could hardly fail to find something of interest. This was another of Lord Trenchard's inventions and it has more than justified itself. Before the war (and again now as soon as reinstatement is possible) the purpose of the map-room was to portray as graphically as possible the incidence of crime and accidents. A number of large-scale maps of the whole Metropolitan Police District, or of parts of it, indicated by means of flags, pins, etc., various aspects of these two major police problems. There was a famous and most elusive thief who for months had a map all to himself. I don't believe in describing in detail for publication the methods employed by specially successful criminals as it may put ideas into heads. It is enough to say that his technique was so perfect that he entered and robbed several hundred small suburban houses before he was eventually arrested. His *modus operandi* was sufficiently individual to be easily identifiable and, by indicating on a map the location and date of each of his many "visits" and his subsequent movements as far as known, a quick and comprehensive view of his activities was presented which gave the pursuit at least a chance of anticipating his next move.

Accident maps convey a great deal of useful information. They show up dangerous roads and "black spots", they can be made to indicate the days of the week and the hours of the day or night most productive of trouble, and they can be varied to illustrate any other special point observed by the statisticians. Keen officers made regular visits to observe the trend of events in their areas and to test the efficacy of any remedial steps taken locally. What the eye sees is more likely

to impress the mind and be remembered than what the ear hears or what tables of figures may try to indicate.

During the war these activities had to be curtailed and mapping was almost entirely restricted to the incidence of bombing, the stopping of roads, traffic deflections and so forth. Convoys of troops, sometimes accompanied by unusual vehicles, had to cross London at all hours of the day or night. It was essential that they should move fast, not get lost or jammed and that the interruption of other traffic should be minimized. Even without bombing, this necessitated up-to-the-minute information about road repairs or other obstructions. With bombing, complications were of course greatly increased.

It was not possible to maintain a central record of all the H.E. bombs which fell in the 1940-1 raids. There were too many of them. But I remember seeing such a map compiled in one Division. It did not profess to be absolutely complete, but it recorded all but a few odd ones which might have escaped notice. It was interesting because it seemed to indicate fairly conclusively that the Hun method was the pepper-pot method. It was London they were aiming at and not the power stations or the railways or the gas works or the seat of Government. The distribution was even, at any rate in this section of London, and, by an odd chance, almost the only little area which had somehow escaped attention was the one important railway junction in the Division. Railways in general suffered badly but only, I feel, because the number of acres covered by railways in London is very great.

The V.1. and V.2. maps at Scotland Yard were quite interesting. They were complete and accurate. Examining the V.2. map one day, I asked the man who maintained it whether any trends or concentrations were visible. He said that apart from the heavy incidence in north-east London—which everybody knew about—the only point observed was that there were two or three rather noticeable lines. To illustrate this he laid a long ruler on the map and its edge went through quite a number of the spots which indicated the points at which rockets had fallen. When I noticed that the edge of his ruler passed also through the block of flats I occupied, I began to wish I had not been quite so inquisitive. However the flat survived.

Another room where a peculiar activity is to be found is the "Information Room". This place has secured a good deal of publicity in recent years and pictures of it have appeared in a number of papers.

But, at the risk of telling some people what they know already, I will describe briefly what happens there because it is a matter which everyone should be familiar with.

First of all the Information Room is where the 999 messages come in. People are constantly asked—in the Press and on the wireless—to ring up 999 if they urgently need police assistance or if they see or hear anything suspicious. What actually happens is this. Mrs. Jones is looking out of the window of her house at Highgate and sees a man peering into the next-door garden in a somewhat dubious way. She goes quietly to her telephone and dials 999. A voice says "Police, Fire or Ambulance." She says "Police" and is immediately connected to the Information Room at Scotland Yard. There a police officer jots down her account of what she has seen, glances at the table map which shows him by means of round coloured discs which is the nearest disengaged police car to the address given. A wireless message is sent to the car and, with any luck, police will be on the scene within a few minutes of Mrs. Jones's message being sent. It may be that they will find that the inquisitive stranger was merely admiring the roses. That doesn't matter. Mrs. Jones has acted sensibly and it is far better to have a few false alarms than that people should not bother to tell the police when their suspicions are aroused. The number of arrests made through this 999 service goes into thousands every year and it could be greater than it is if the public would remember its existence and act quickly. Many houses are extremely easy to enter from the back or the side or the area without much risk of being seen by a policeman passing—perhaps at long intervals—in the street. But there is a big chance that a thief may be noticed or heard from a neighbouring house at some stage of the job. Speed is obviously important and that can only be achieved if people know exactly what to do and do it without having to consult neighbours or to search the telephone directory for the right number.

Many of the messages received in the Information Room come from policemen themselves. An isolated officer needing quick help, e.g. to surround a house or deal with some other job which needs more than one man, may obtain it if he can get to a police box or any private telephone.

A good many other things happen in the Information Room, which is the centre of the whole system of communications for the 700 square miles of the Metropolitan Police District. It is also the "Clapham Junction" of the tube message system which embraces

the three Scotland Yard buildings and of the teleprinter which covers the whole District.

Another place where odd things happen from time to time is a corner of the Yard known for some reason as the "Back Hall". It isn't a hall and it is at the side rather than the back, but perhaps that doesn't matter much. It is one of the bits of Scotland Yard which never goes to bed. An inspector and a few constables are always there. In the daytime they deal with many of the callers and miscellaneous telephone inquiries or pass them on to other parts of the building. At night and on Sundays they cope with anything that may arise, and it would not be easy to devise a conundrum, however remotely connected with police work, to which an experienced Back Hall inspector could not produce an answer. The same applies no doubt to inspectors and sergeants at any police station, but Scotland Yard itself seems to act as a specially powerful magnet to odd people with queer problems.

Some of the callers are extremely odd and an elementary knowledge of psychology is part of the necessary equipment of a Back Hall inspector. Great patience too has to be exercised at times. He must listen to the story even if he knows from the first sentence or from the appearance of the teller that it is a fairy story. It is useless to tell an unhappy person who seeks protection from mysterious evil influences or injurious "waves" that their fears are groundless. They must be seriously and patiently heard and given such comforting assurances as are possible.

Not long after I went to the Yard a man who seemed quite rational asked to see me personally but would not state his business as it was too confidential and important to be mentioned except in the privacy of my room. On the assurance that he appeared to be quite "all right" I had him shown in. He started sensibly enough on some topic—I forget what—and then suddenly in a dramatic whisper: "Have you heard the men whistling on the buildings?" "What men, what buildings?" I asked feebly. "The men working on the scaffolds all over London. Haven't you heard them whistling?" "No," I replied, "I don't think I have. But why shouldn't they? Shows they're happy." "Ah, but you don't know what it's for. They're signalling to the people who follow me about all the time."

"Is that so?" I said. "Then it's a very good thing you came and told me. It's a little late to do anything this evening. But immediate

steps will be taken and by twelve noon to-morrow your trouble will cease."

He appeared to be enormously relieved and, so far as I know, never came back, though I don't of course imagine that the relief was more than temporary.

To me this was a new experience but the Back Hall have to deal with similar troubles at the rate of several a week.

Many of these unhappy people do not call personally. They prefer to write, and when they write it is generally a good long letter. Every day of the year the Scotland Yard mail-bag includes a number of letters which are at once allotted to a special heading. They all have to be read in case they may reveal dangerous tendencies, but it is as a rule a waste of time to answer them. Nothing that is any use can be said and a reply of any kind is liable only to act as a stimulus to fresh outpourings.

There have been cases of people writing two or three times a week for years. Perhaps it gives them comfort to unburden themselves even to a remote and unresponsive building. I hope it does, as the task of deciphering the letters, which generally seem to have been written at speed and are in a sort of peculiar running hand, is a somewhat trying one.

The last place I propose to mention is the Crime Museum or, as it is sometimes called, the "Black Museum". This is not open to public inspection and only police officers or others who can claim a professional interest in such matters are allowed to visit it. It was always my ambition to see a proper historical and educational museum installed at the Yard before I left. For years accommodation was the difficulty, but with the erection of the new building an opportunity of carrying out this plan appeared and the necessary space was allotted. But the outbreak of war knocked out all such superfluous schemes, and I left without seeing the idea take shape. However, I've no doubt it will come in time as it certainly should.

The existing black museum consists largely of somewhat morbid exhibits relating to famous crimes of the past. There are other things also in it which have a wider interest and for crime investigators some instructional value. Most people who are allowed to see it seem to find the visit worth while. But I have always felt a little unhappy that we had not something to show, particularly to our foreign visitors, which would cover the whole field of police activities and be rather more in keeping with the high traditions and history of the Force.

The Hendon College had some well-arranged scientific exhibits relating to special types of crime. The future museum at Headquarters will no doubt extend these ideas and include also any historical objects which can still be collected together.

Not at Scotland Yard itself but nevertheless an important feature of the Headquarters organization is the Medical Branch. The task of maintaining a high standard of health amongst 19,000 men scattered over 700 square miles is clearly no light one, but so long as it is successfully accomplished, no public attention is attracted and even the Force itself is liable to give little thought to this invaluable service.

The function of the branch was briefly defined by Lord Byng. In his first interview with Dr. Isaac Jones, who has held the position of Chief Medical Officer since 1929, Lord Byng summed up the task in characteristic fashion—"Keep 'em well and keep 'em happy, Medicalo." Dr. Jones has, I know, treasured this simple injunction and, under his wise guidance and inspiration, the medical service has done, and is still doing, a fine job for the Force, both collectively and individually.

The policeman's first introduction to the branch takes place when, as a candidate for admission to the Force, he stands, in a state of nature, before the Chief Medical Officer or his deputy. If, as sometimes happens, the doctor turns him down after one quick look, the candidate may not unnaturally feel a trifle disconcerted. Physical defects such as flat feet, varicose veins, and no doubt many others unknown to me, are visible at a glance to the trained eye that has scanned many thousands of such exhibits, and the medical man is too busy to go through the movements of full examination if he knows the answer at once.

From the moment when the recruit is accepted until he retires on pension he is under the care of the medical service. The organization which performs this function consists of a headquarters staff (including two medical officers and a consulting surgeon), about 180 "divisional surgeons", a nursing home, thirty or more beds at St. Thomas' Hospital, and a dental clinic. There is also an excellent police convalescent home at Hove, but this is not a part of the Metropolitan organization as officers from other southern Forces have access to it.

The dental clinic at Lambeth is, I believe, one of the most efficient and up-to-date establishments of the kind in the country. The standard of work insisted upon is the highest and it is safe to say that the treatment given free to the London policeman is as good as, or better

than, any that could be obtained elsewhere. That he appreciates the fact seems to be indicated by the heavy increase of attendances which occurred when the central clinic was set up instead of the previous system of local treatment.

Another instance of appreciation—of a highly practical kind—was encountered a short while ago in connection with St. Thomas' Hospital. It arose out of a letter received at the Yard from the secretary of the hospital asking whether collecting boxes could be put in Section Houses (where unmarried officers normally live). I much disliked the idea of refusing such a request from the hospital in which thousands of policemen have been so magnificently treated, but at the same time I felt that it would be unwise to make any exception to the general rule maintained for a long time, against charity collecting boxes of any kind. Therefore after obtaining the agreement of the men's representatives, I replied: "Sorry, no, we can't do that, but would you like a Service Subscription?" A "Service Subscription" is a collection made throughout the whole Force on a specified pay day. There are only two or three of them per annum and they are generally for some specially tragic case of misfortune to a police officer or for the sufferers from a national catastrophe. The normal proceeds of such a subscription are in the neighbourhood of £700-£800. But the one for St. Thomas's Hospital produced nearly twice this sum. And that did not finish the matter by any means. The idea of saying "Thank you" to Thomas's in a tangible form caught on. From all over the District contributions, large and small, came in and went on coming in. These consisted mostly of the proceeds of boxing shows, sports, concerts and so forth, and the unexpended balances of various clubs. When last I heard of it the amount had risen to over £5,000 and there will, it is hoped, be in any reconstruction of the hospital, a small ward endowed in perpetuity and known as the Metropolitan Police Ward.

The National Health scheme will presumably put the lid finally on any such laudable efforts.

CHAPTER VII

PRINCIPLES AND POWERS

THE things which we have recently formed the habit of calling "Police Principles" have taken shape during the last century. It might be said that Sir Robert Peel hatched the egg and the two first Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis, Sir Richard Mayne and Sir Charles Rowan, incubated it and brought up the chick in the way it should go.

This is not really perhaps a very good metaphor because the idea of mutual responsibility which is the foundation of the British method of law enforcement has been in existence since very early days.

In Saxon times the general plan was simple and apparently effective. The country was divided into Shires, Hundreds and Tithings. The tithing consisted of ten persons who were mutually responsible for the good behaviour of one another. If a member of a tithing committed an offence it was the business of the other members to apprehend him. Should he try to escape them a "hue and cry" was started and he would be pursued until caught. In the event of failure to seize and surrender the miscreant, a penalty was imposed on the tithing.

There is a delightful description of the system (or of the main features of it) given by that fascinating chronicler William Lambard ("of Lincolnes Inne, Gent") in his "Perambulation of Kent", written in 1570.

Here is what he says:

"The Danes, both in his (King Alfred's) time and before had flocked by sea to the coasts of this land in great numbers, sometimes wasting and spoiling with sword and fire, wherever they might arrive, and sometimes taking with them great booties to their ships; which thing (continuing for many years together) caused the husbandmen to abandon their tillage and gave occasion and

hardiness to evil disposed persons to fall to the like pillage and robbery. . . .

"The good King Alfred therefore . . . espying this outrage and thinking it no less the part of a politique Prince to rout out the noisome subject than to hold out the foreign enemy, by advice of his Council, divided the whole realm into certain parts, which he termed shires or shares and portions, and appointed over every one shire an Earle or Alderman (or both) to whom he committed the government and rule of the same.

"These shires he also brake into smaller parts, whereof some were called Lathes, other hundreds because they contained jurisdiction over a hundred pledges; and others tithings, so named because there were in each of them to the number of ten persons, whereof each one was surety and pledge for others good abearing.

"He ordained furthermore that every man should procure himself to be received into some tithing and that if any were found of small credit, that his neighbours would not become pledge for him, he should forthwith be committed to prison, lest he might do harm abroad.

"By this device of his it came to pass that good subjects (the travailing bees of the realm) resorted safely to their labour again and the evil and idle droanes were driven clean out of the hyve of the common wealth, so that in short time the whole Realm tasted of the sweet honey of this blessed peace and tranquillity in so much that (as one writeth) if a man had let fall his purse in the highway he might at great leisure and with good assurance have come back and taken it up again."

In another work by this same William Lambard, well known no doubt to most students of police history and bearing the pleasant title of "The Duties of Constables, Borsholders, Tythingmen and such other Lowe and Lay Ministers of the Peace," the system is more fully described. Here too is given a version of the origin of the word "constable":

"The name Constable is made (as I have read) of two English words put together, namely Cuning (or Cyng) and staple, which do signify the stay (or hold) of the King. For, by the ancient custome of the Realm there is a great officer called the Constable of England who by means of the high authority that he had, was

a principal stay unto the King's Government . . . out of which office, this lower Constableness was at the first drawn and fetched, and is, as it were, a very finger of that hand."

Another version of the origin of the word Constable is that it came over with the Conqueror and that France got it from Rome. The Latin "Comes Stabuli" signifying Count of the Stable—a sort of equerry or Master of the Horse—became in French "conestable" and in English "constable".

To return to the "Principles". First of all, what are they? They don't appear in any Act of Parliament and, so far as I know, they have not, as such, been ever officially laid down. They evolved gradually during the nineteenth century and may be stated as follows:

1. Police are essentially citizens paid to discharge duties incumbent on all citizens.
2. Success is contingent on public approval, respect and co-operation.
3. The preventive function—applicable both to crime and disorder—is paramount.
4. Force is employed only when persuasion fails. It must be the minimum necessary to achieve the end.
5. Law enforcement must be impartial and independent of policy.
6. Courtesy, friendliness and helpfulness must be shown to all, regardless of class or station.
7. The police have no judicial function. The decision of guilt or innocence and the punishment of offenders are no part of police responsibility.
8. The true test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the number of prosecutions.
9. Preservation of life and protection from injury are police functions to be discharged regardless of personal danger.

The Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 which, as everybody knows, inaugurated for a part of London the system of policing which has now spread over the whole country (and also over the Dominions and Colonies) had little to say about the methods to be employed by the re-organized Force it brought into existence. The general objects of the Act are stated in the preamble thus:



"Illustrated"

Police to the rescue

“Whereas offences against property have of late increased in and near the Metropolis; and the local establishments of nightly watch and nightly police have been found inadequate to the prevention and detection of crime, by reason of the frequent unfitness of the individuals employed, the insufficiency of their number, the limited sphere of their authority, and their want of connection and co-operation with each other: And whereas it is expedient to substitute a new and more efficient system of police in lieu of such establishments of nightly watch and nightly police, within the limits hereinafter mentioned, and to constitute an office of police, which, acting under the immediate authority of one of His Majesty’s Principal Secretaries of State, shall direct and control the whole of such new system of police within those limits: Be it therefore enacted, etc.”

The only definition of the task to be performed is contained (a) in the Section dealing with the two Justices of the Peace to act as Commissioners of Police (they did not actually receive this title until 1839) and (b) in the oath prescribed for constables. Of the Justices the Act says that “no such person shall act as a Justice of the Peace at any court of general or quarter sessions, nor in any matter out of sessions except *for the preservation of the peace, the prevention of crimes, the detection and committal of offenders*, and in carrying into execution the purposes of this Act.” Of the constables the Act says that “a sufficient number of fit and able men shall from time to time . . . be appointed as a police force for the whole of such district who shall be sworn in by one of the said justices to act as constables *for preserving the peace, and preventing robberies and other felonies, and apprehending offenders against the peace. . . .*”

In so far as there was anything new in this statement of a constable’s duties, it lay in the emphasis placed on the prevention of crime. In theory at any rate—and to a very limited extent in practice also—prevention had always been a police function. Even the most decrepit old “Charlie” might, by his mere presence in the streets of London at night, have impeded the activities of a few wrong-doers, and, no doubt, the more up-to-date and efficient pre-1829 police bodies, such as the Bow Street Runners, the Bow Street Patrols and the River Police had, mainly by better and more effective detection, discouraged criminal activities so far as their limited numbers and spheres of action

allowed. But, broadly speaking, the preventive aspects of police duties had remained very much in the background in the old days. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the amount of emphasis placed on these aspects has been—and still is—steadily on the increase.

The gradual evolution of a police practice based on the principles enunciated above was a development of great social importance. What made this system of law enforcement unique was that it achieved, as no other nation had succeeded in doing, a combination of correct principles with sound organization. The plan was in keeping with the democratic idea and suitable to our national temperament.

No one would be bold enough, or stupid enough, to claim perfection for this, or any other, man-made plan. But such defects as may appear would seem to be not so much in the plan itself as in its operation.

The Police Force is the tool employed by the community (not, be it noted, by the Government) for the enforcement on its behalf of the laws that it has made for its own government. Imperfections arise not from wrong design but from the complexity and ever-changing nature of the task and from the fallibility of all human enterprises.

Before 1829 the almost complete failure of the various police organizations to enforce the laws, which became increasingly evident and reached a climax in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was due in the main to the changed conditions arising from the Industrial Revolution. A system which had worked tolerably well in a mainly rural community was not readily adaptable to the new concentrations of population in industrial areas. The failure was one of organization—or lack of organization.

This country has never been threatened with a Gestapo or an Ogpu. The police have never been on a national basis and even if they were nationalized for purposes of efficiency, so long as the “principles” remain, they could not be used by a minority Government—or by *any* Government—as a means of imposing their will on the nation.

There are a number of quite strong arguments for the nationalization of the police, either wholly or in respect of certain of its functions, and there is reason to believe that Peel himself had some such ultimate objective in mind at one time. The machinery of crime detection, relying as it does more and more on rapid communications, on wireless, fast-travelling cars and perhaps before long on air transport, is hampered in its operation by the existence of a large number of separate Forces, many of them covering absurdly small areas. That

is only one of the arguments for nationalization, with perhaps regionalization as an intermediate step. There are other points such as economy of administration, uniformity in traffic restrictions and control, and so forth. But the counter-arguments are strong also and there is no present probability of any political party stirring up trouble for itself (and it would get plenty) by attempting such a change unless and until the case for it acquires a great deal more force than it has now. In this, as in many other such matters, our national genius for gradualness and compromise seems likely to point the way. Contenting ourselves at the start with the removal of the more glaring absurdities, we shall move no doubt steadily in the direction of larger units with nationalization or regionalization applied only to certain items of work. (Regional laboratories and regional systems of recruitment and training are already accepted and working.)

The abolition of small Forces always meets with local opposition out of all proportion to the apparent unimportance of the issue. It matters little to England whether Slushington-on-the-Wash retains its own Force of twenty men or becomes for police purposes part of the County. But it matters a great deal to the local council of Slushington. Their little Force is a sort of domestic pet. It is very likely extremely efficient. They are proud of it. Its uniform is a little different from that of other more ordinary Forces. Its Chief Constable, inspector, two sergeants and sixteen constables are all known personally to every member of the Watch Committee. They salute smartly and that is in itself enough to make a councillor take a brighter view of life on a cold morning. The constables know the life history and antecedents of every inhabitant of their borough. This in itself has a strong crime-preventive value and greatly facilitates detection when offences occur.

In spite of all that, the case against the quite small Forces is overwhelming and various Commissions and Committees have reported against them. Some have gone; more are going.

At this stage, opposition is almost entirely local, but it would no doubt be a different story if complete nationalization were proposed. Many people would be frightened that the very existence of a centrally controlled Force might tempt some future Government or some future Home Secretary to use it improperly.

Democracy is no insurance against bad government. Hitler achieved his position at the start through the votes of the German people. To what extent jiggery-pokery influenced this result one

does not know, nor does it really matter. The point is that German votes put him in a position which enabled him to do the rest. Without giving the people any further chance of expressing their views, he liquidated the opposition, and the agency he employed for this purpose was a highly-organized, centrally-controlled police force. Such a force is an essential item in the equipment of every dictator. He must make it next door to impossible for any large number of people to unite against him. That can only be done by an elaborate organization of spies and informers, arrests on suspicion, imprisonment without trial, third degree and all the rest of it. Whatever various names the agencies employed may bear, they are in fact police—police in uniform and police in plain clothes, police open and police secret.

There are those who believe that if conditions in this country became desperately bad with a return of serious unemployment accompanied perhaps by inflation, producing widespread hardship, and if our elected representatives continuously failed to restore the situation, we might conceivably allow ourselves to be inveigled into some form of totalitarianism or one-party government. If things are bad enough people will accept almost anything in the way of a government if they see a prospect of temporary relief from their distresses.

Anything resembling a Fascist régime would no doubt be unthinkable for a very long time. The name and the smell and everything connected with it are too abhorrent and will, it is to be hoped, remain so for two or three generations at least.

But "Communism" has a more seductive sound to a large number of Russophiles, some of whom fail to realize that an essential preliminary to their Utopia is a long period of dictatorship—not a "dictatorship of the proletariat" (mere words, which mean nothing)—but of a small group controlled by one man. That of course is still the position in Russia after nearly thirty years and the trend seems to be rather away from, than towards, what is generally understood as Communism. As some wise man said: "There is only one country in the world which is not in any danger of communism and that is Russia."

The point I am getting at—rather laboriously I fear—is that the British police system is an almost absolute guarantee against dictatorship of any kind, whether of a person or of a party. Even if the police were nationalized, it could not be used in the way dictators have to use their police. The tool would break in the dictatorial hand. He

could not remodel it because the principles on which it works are too fundamental to be eradicated. He would have to start again and make a different sort of police force with a different sort of man. That would take time and people would not be likely to sit around and watch him do it.

Thus it might be said that the Government, the police and the people form between them a sort of mutual protection society. If the people misbehave, get out of hand or go about breaking things or one another, the police restrain them. If the police abuse their powers or misbehave in some other way, the people turn and rend them through their three strong weapons, Press, Parliament, and Courts of Law. By the withdrawal of their support, the people can render the police practically powerless. Lastly, if the Government misbehave by making mischievous or oppressive laws contrary to the true wishes of the people, such laws will be largely ineffective because the police will not be able to enforce them even if they try to do so. Circles are sometimes said to be "vicious", but here we have for once a virtuous circle—a system of automatic safeguards against bad law-makers, bad law-breakers and bad law enforcement.

If any Government tried in this country to use the police for political purposes in an oppressive manner, the police just wouldn't play. They played in Germany. Yes, but the Hun is by nature a bully. It comes natural to him to bully or to be bullied. And furthermore Hitler recruited his police from the dregs of the population. Happily, bullying is not one of our national characteristics and we intensely resent being bullied. There are few things that raise such a storm of indignation as any suggestion of harshness or oppressiveness by people in positions of authority. The Irene Savidge incident (dealt with more fully in another chapter) is an excellent instance of public reaction to what they thought (quite incorrectly) was the employment of third degree on a poor helpless female.

In this country, so far from taking our police from the dregs, we recruit the best men we can find. The qualities which secured early promotion in Germany were skill with the rubber truncheon, willingness to beat, torture and kill fellow-humans, including old people, women and children. In any country, if you took the dregs and trained it in brutishness from the age of eight and rewarded it according to its sadistic efficiency, you'd get a pretty nasty growth. In Germany, as everybody knows, the product was unbelievably horrible.

In this country the natural kindliness of man, the system of education, the method of recruiting and training police officers and the sacredness of police principles are, I suggest, absolute safeguards against oppressive or dictatorial government, which cannot start or thrive without a police force willing to act as its instrument.

It is a little curious that although the importance of the preventive function in police work is so generally accepted, it is in the discharge of this side of their duties that the police are most likely to run into trouble and provoke criticism. Everyone who is robbed is naturally keen that the robbers should be traced and brought to justice. But they would regard it as nicer still not to be robbed at all. That is to say, the policeman is doing a better job if he nabs the robber before the robbery than after it.

To implement this bright thought, the law gives the police officer power to arrest "a suspected person or reputed thief frequenting or loitering . . . with intent to commit felony". The officer must have good grounds for his suspicions, grounds which he can produce in a court of law. It isn't enough that he didn't like the looks of him or the way he was behaving and came to the conclusion that he was "up to no good". There must be some "antecedent facts" which put the person into the category of "suspected person or reputed thief". This is all a bit tricky for the officer. He may observe a dubious-looking character peering into cars at a parking place and trying the handles to see if they are locked, or carefully inspecting the defences of a jeweller's shop. But, unless he knows him as a "wrong 'un" or has seen him at the same game before, he daren't pounce, because he won't be able to satisfy the court that the man was not only "loitering with intent" but was also, within the meaning of the law, a "suspected person or reputed thief". He must therefore bide his time on the chance—a pretty flimsy chance as a rule—that he will be lucky enough to catch his man in the very act of taking something from the car or breaking into the shop. If the officer happens to see the same man at the same—or similar—funny business twice, he may take the chance of making an arrest the second time with a fair prospect of satisfying the court that in consequence of incident number one the person had given the officer justification for treating him as a suspected person at incident number two. A keen policeman's life is full of snags.

Every now and then a suspected person case is dismissed in the court. There may be also an implication that the circumstances of the case did not appear to the magistrate to have justified the

constable in making an arrest. Of course the constable ought not to mind that, but it worries him all the same because he is liable to feel that the court has "got him wrong". If he could only have made them see what he had seen. No one knows better than a policeman the difference between the man who is just "taking the air" and the one who is looking for an open window, an unlocked door or a smash-and-grabbable shop. It is a matter of what he looks at and how he looks at it, of the way he walks and the way he glances round. The constable's attempts to paint this picture in court are "money for jam" to the glib lawyer employed by the defence. "Soon it will not be safe to walk about the streets at all. His entirely respectable client was merely waiting for his young woman at a place arranged and surely there is no crime in his spending the time looking at the pretty things in the shop windows or taking an interest in the cars in the parking place. He is interested in cars and was assessing the relative merits of the Baby Austin and the Morris Ten. Things have come to a pretty pass when a reputable citizen, thus innocently occupied, can be pounced upon, dragged through the public street and cast into a cold and clammy cell." Courts generally see through this sort of thing easily enough, but sometimes the glib lawyer gets away with it. The constable may indeed have made a mistake and courts, quite rightly, take the line that it is better for a few wrong 'uns to get off than for one innocent man to be punished.

But it is not easy for the P.C. to see things in that light. He has done his job honestly and if the result is that he is scored off and made to look a fool, the effect on his future value as a policeman may be very unfortunate.

People are so ready—even eager it sometimes seems—to find fault with police action and attribute bad motives when there are none, that it is not surprising if some of the "old hands" see and hear as little as they can. It is the safest way of keeping out of trouble.

Often enough the very people who cry out most about the terrible amount of crime in their district will be loudest in their whoops of delight when a case is given against the police with costs.

One of the most difficult crimes to deal with is that of theft from vehicles. Many a young lad starts his criminal career by trying his hand at this tempting and easy form of theft. No special skill is necessary, no tools, no elaborate preparation. Just a quick eye for the opportunity, a quick glance to see that the coast is clear and a quick get-away. There is little hope of catching him in the act or

after he has achieved his purpose. The aim is to get him when he is looking for his chance, trying the car doors and spotting those with liftable luggage in them. He is "frequenting a public place with intent to commit a felony" and if the P.C. feels that he can convince a court that he is also a "suspected person or reputed thief" then he should act. He has not long to make up his mind and he may occasionally make it up wrong. There is little danger of an innocent person, that is to say a person truly innocent in intention as well as action, being wrongfully punished. If the case, when examined, is bad or even weak, the Station Officer will decline to take the charge or, if it passes his scrutiny, the court will dismiss it.

As I have said, the P.C. should not mind either of these things happening and unless he is regarded as having acted dishonestly, there should be no black mark against him. But when he is held up to obloquy, when what he did is represented as the action of a fool or a bully, or—as more often—of one trying to obtain advancement through over-officiousness, the effect may easily be to turn a keen man into a safe one, a real policeman into a uniform-carrier.

Policemen are only human and they naturally prize their own good names and the good name of their Force. They do not in practice make arrests till they are as certain as they can be. Unless that much is assumed (in the absence of real evidence to the contrary) they may be tempted, like the Chinese monkey, to stop their eyes, their ears and their mouths lest evil be seen, heard or uttered. And the crime figures will tell the tale.

Another form of police activity which produces trouble from time to time—not very often—is what is generally called "stopping and questioning". This is not strictly preventive because the normal reason for it is not that the person stopped is suspected of criminal intent but that he is suspected of having already accomplished his wicked purpose and being on his way home with the swag.

This method of catching thieves is based on Section 66 of the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, under which a constable "may stop, search and detain . . . any person who may be reasonably suspected of having or conveying in any manner anything stolen or unlawfully obtained". The catch here is the word "reasonably". If an officer saw the Archbishop of Canterbury leaving Paddington Station at midday with an attaché-case in his hand, it would scarcely be reasonable to suspect him of having a stolen diamond necklace therein. If on the other hand, a layman with his cap well down over his eyes is

observed at 3 a.m. hurrying furtively along with an awkward-looking bundle or perhaps a suitcase in his hand, if he seems to be taking trouble to appear inconspicuous and looks round from time to time as one anticipating pursuit, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the goods he is carrying may have been unlawfully obtained.

Between these two extremes there are innumerable gradations of suspiciousness. The officer generally has to make up his mind quickly (not necessarily in the thing generally, and absurdly, called a split second, but in a very short time) whether the person observed approaches more nearly to the Archbishop or to the furtive one. When, as frequently happens, the "stopee" is able satisfactorily to explain himself and his burden, with or without an examination of the burden, an apology by the officer for having detained him is generally accepted and the incident is closed. But in one case in a hundred—or it may be only one in a thousand—the stopee chooses to regard the interference as an insult, refuses to explain himself or to allow his burden to be searched. Then the officer has to decide, on the basis of the person's demeanour, way of speech and appearance at close range, whether he has indeed been unlucky enough to detain an innocent—perhaps important—citizen or whether he is faced with a criminal who is trying to bluff his way out of an unfortunate situation.

In the former case he will perhaps let him proceed on his way, reserving his observations on cantankerous self-important burghers till later. In the latter case he must require the stopee to accompany him to the station and, if co-operation in this move is not forthcoming, he must physically propel him in the required direction, using no more force than is necessary for the purpose.

Obviously the common-sense attitude of the innocent person stopped and questioned is one of appreciation that the police, for whom he pays quite a lot in rates and taxes, are exhibiting vigilance. But with a certain type of person the thing called dignity is terribly sensitive and any assault upon it is liable to inhibit normal ratiocination.

I remember, when in my teens, being stopped and asked what I had in my suitcase when I was hurrying along in the small hours of the morning in a suburb of London with the intention of catching a ridiculously early train at Paddington. Needless to say I had no difficulty in explaining my mission and when I showed willingness to expose the contents of my suitcase, the officer declined, apologized nicely, said it was a nasty cold morning, wasn't it, and that was that.

Perhaps I was too young to have developed much dignity, but my reaction, I well remember, was that the incident had added a much needed spice of variety—almost adventure—to a somewhat bleak and chilly expedition. To be stopped by the law made me feel a little important. But I was, I repeat, very young.

The outstanding example of hullabaloo arising from a simple stopping and questioning case occurred when Lord Trenchard was Commissioner. It was the case of Flying Officer X. Let us call him Fox as he has no doubt thankfully forgotten the whole unfortunate business by now and it would not be very kind to include his name in recalling it so long after, even though it involved nothing the least discreditable to him.

A police car containing two C.I.D. officers in plain clothes, patrolling in the neighbourhood of Victoria Station at about 2 a.m. saw a man (Mr. Fox) in a burberry walking with a suitcase in his hand. There had been a lot of thieving in this part, some of it at night. They decided that as people do not often struggle about with suitcases in such a place and at such a time, it would be worth while to "stop and question". They therefore drove up alongside, got out, told him who they were, and asked him where he was going and what he had in the suitcase. Mr. Fox unfortunately jumped to the conclusion that he was being attacked by some sort of gangsters, and nothing the police officers could do would persuade him that they were genuine. They showed him their warrant cards, but as he had never seen a warrant card before this did not convince him. They drew his attention to the wireless aerial on the car as evidence that it was a police car. But that was equally useless. He thought merely that they were trying to inveigle him into it with the object of "taking him for a ride". In the meantime the officers became more and more convinced from Mr. Fox's attitude that they were "on something". They therefore told him that they must take him to the police station; but when they attempted to do so he fought like a tiger and, although quite a light-weight, put up a stout resistance. On the way to the station they passed a coffee-stall and Mr. Fox appealed to some customers who were there to come to his aid. It wasn't until they told him that his captors were real, genuine policemen that he calmed down and ceased to resist.

At the station it did not take long for Mr. Fox to convince the officer in charge that he was an innocent person. He had driven late to London in his own car, had left it in a garage and was trekking

around looking for a hotel as the one he originally meant to stay in was full and could not take him.

At this point the police made their first and most important error. As soon as they realized that they had arrested and brought to the station an innocent person, they should have done everything possible to repair the damage. They should have apologized, helped him to find a hotel and perhaps lent him a police car to get him there. But the senior of the two C.I.D. officers was in no mood for apologizing. It is difficult to blame him very severely though he was in fact in the wrong. Perhaps he resented being mistaken for a bandit (though C.I.D. officers patrolling in plain clothes at night are not always very particular about their appearance) and in any case he felt that Mr. Fox had caused him a great deal of unnecessary trouble as well as causing him to expend a good deal of energy. Anyway he refused to apologize and Mr. Fox left the station in a very indignant frame of mind and went straight to his Member of Parliament the next day.

The sequel was a protracted debate in the House of Commons, during which the Home Secretary (Sir John Gilmour), after trying to make light of the case at first, found himself overborne by a chorus of indignation and had to promise a full inquiry by the Commissioner personally. Several members regarded the case as so important as to call for investigation by a House of Commons Committee, but the Home Secretary successfully resisted.

Lord Trenchard dealt with the case with his usual thoroughness, fairness and speed. His report to the Home Secretary was published in extenso in *The Times* and that closed the matter.

There were several other points besides those I have mentioned, involved in this case. Did the officers use more force than was necessary; did they announce themselves as policemen clearly at the start; should one of them have gone off to find a uniformed officer to vouch for them rather than haul the poor Mr. Fox to the station and so on? To give only the bare bones of the affair has taken quite a lot of space and I have done so because it is a remarkable example of how in police work a minor incident, which appears at the start to be no different from a thousand others, may turn into front-page news and give Home Secretaries uncomfortable hours in Parliament.

It was anyway a satisfactory feature that throughout the whole business no one questioned for a moment the right of the officers in the admitted circumstances to "stop and question".

There is another and quite different form of stopping and

questioning, generally referred to as a "round-up". This is done under emergency regulations, is therefore a war-time phenomenon which will presumably disappear before so very long.

The regulation says that "a constable in uniform or any person authorized for the purpose under the said regulations, may require a person who under the regulations is for the time being responsible for the custody of an identity card, forthwith to produce the card to him."

The idea is to enable the police to gather fish of various kinds into their net. The bulk of the catch consists of deserters and evaders of service, but there is always a chance of roping in a few black-marketeers conveying goods which they have difficulty in accounting for and other "persons wanted" in connection with more ordinary crime.

The round-up is seldom employed on a big scale. It is fully realized that the inconvenience and delay caused to a large number of honest citizens is considerable and can only be justified for special reasons and very infrequently.

It was rather remarkable how patiently the public and the Press accepted a fairly extensive round-up carried out in the West End of London in 1945. It would not have been surprising if at least some of the papers had raised a bit of a howl. One or two did suggest quite politely that this sort of thing was all very well but should not become a habit. Crime was much in the headlines at the time and the general reaction was to thank God that the police were taking the offensive and not merely sitting around and bleating about shortness of manpower and all that.

It was generally realized too that every deserter is a potential criminal—more so, that is, than other people—because he can't get rations honestly and, without any discharge papers to show, finds most forms of employment barred to him. He is therefore compelled to live by his wits and he needs to be specially careful to avoid the attentions of the police, who have uncomfortably efficient ways of spotting deserters. There will be no hope for him of getting away with a small fine or probation or "bound over", however trivial the offence. Back to his regiment he will go with the prospect of a definitely frigid reception when he gets there.

Newspaper editors no doubt appreciated all this and generally decided not to criticize the police for adopting the only method which gives them any prospect of collecting deserters, except in ones and twos.

The results on this particular occasion were not dramatic though some senior police officers felt that they were good enough to justify the somewhat elaborate preparations needed and the public inconvenience involved. Others were dubious. The number of deserters still at large was not materially reduced and the other fish landed were not wildly exciting.

There is a further argument against any wide employment of this method. It is based on a war-time power; we are no longer at war and though deserters are still deserters and crime is still bad, we ought to be chary of using a war-time power for other than real war purposes. If we were after spies, fifth columnists and saboteurs, that would be different. But such gentry have, thank goodness, ceased to be an immediate danger and people are quite naturally liable to resent having emergency measures applied to them in the absence of any emergency.

One of the police principles that I have quoted earlier in this chapter is that "the police have no judicial function. The decision of guilt or innocence and the punishment of offenders are no part of police responsibility". This principle is not statutory but it is generally accepted and its existence is no doubt one of the obstacles in the way of our adopting in this country the plan followed in several other countries, of empowering policemen to take fines on the spot for certain minor offences.

There is a lot to be said for this procedure. If a citizen contravenes some not very important regulation, by-law or section of an Act of Parliament, whether inadvertently or deliberately, it saves both the citizen and the police a great deal of time and trouble if the matter can be settled right away by the payment of a fixed fine. In Germany they use it, I believe—or used it before the war—for such offences as dropping litter about in public places. In this country we allow people to throw their unwanted trifles—such as cigarette boxes, newspapers, bus tickets, etc.—about as much as they like, with results seen at their best—or worst—after a bank holiday in any public resort. Even if we made these unpleasant habits illegal, it would be practically impossible to enforce the prohibition. For each cigarette box thrown away a name and address would have to be taken (which might or might not be correct). This would be followed by police report, application for summons, issue of summons, delivery of summons, hearing of case in court, imposition and collection of penalty. The

result would be that until the public began to be a little more tidy-minded, most of the police would be fully occupied in writing reports and attending courts. Whereas if the officer had the power to exact a fixed penalty—say 2s. 6d. or 5s.—on the spot, the public would very soon learn to respect the amenities of open spaces. There would have to be safeguards, of course. It would be made clear to the offender that if he denied the offence or was dissatisfied in any way, he could come before a court. Few would do so.

We have already for a long time accepted the principle in smuggling cases. The Customs and Excise officer, who is for this purpose in effect a sort of specialized policeman, when he detects a passenger attempting to smuggle dutiable goods, is empowered to accept the appropriate fine, which may be a considerable sum. Under the law, the fine is determined by the Commissioners of Customs and Excise but in ordinary cases the local officer makes the assessment and collects the money unless the offender prefers to go before a court. The system seems to work quite well, although the amounts involved (treble the value of the goods including the duty payable thereon, or £100) are often substantial.

There is no doubt about the general soundness of the principle which separates the police function from the judicial function, but its validity would be hardly affected by giving police power in specified cases, with proper safeguards, of accepting a pre-determined fine on the spot. The policeman would not really, as some suggest, be deciding guilt or innocence or determining the penalty. He would be saying, in effect, to the citizen: "You seem to me to have committed such and such an offence. I can report you for a summons, but if you prefer to pay a fine of x shillings here and now, you will save yourself, me and the court a whole lot of bother. What about it?"

The officer has not assumed the judicial function in the sense of having put justice out of the reach of the offender because the court is still accessible to him if he wishes to use it. It is true that the suggestion made to him to pay up and be done with it can be regarded as the application of pressure, but it is not very oppressive pressure and the citizen is in no way bound to submit to it.

There is not in principle much difference between this procedure and that involved in the accepted system of verbal warnings or written cautions employed in minor traffic offences. The law says that a certain action is an offence and prescribes penalties which a court

may impose. But a constable may, within certain carefully defined limits, exercise a judicial function to the extent of pointing out the offence to the offender and telling him not to do it again please.

Similarly, when the constable thinks that the offence should be reported, a senior police officer may decide to issue a written caution instead of applying for a summons. He again is exercising a judicial function in a very limited way, though he does not *assume* it in the sense of depriving the citizen of his right of access to the court. An offender who objects to a verbal warning or a written caution is always told that he may go before a court if he likes, but he seldom does.

It has been suggested that any system of fines on the spot would be liable to have a harmful effect on relations between police and public. It is difficult to say definitely that this would not be so, as public reactions are dangerous things to prophesy about, but I see no particular reason why people should resent paying small fines at the time of the offence as an alternative to the protracted and troublesome business of summonses. The plan has anyway the advantage that it could be tried out in a small way to start with and could be abandoned if this or any other serious defect became apparent.

The general question of punishment, though not as we have seen part of the *business* of the police, is necessarily one in which most police officers take a keen interest, and it is perhaps natural that they should tend more often to criticize the lightness of sentences than their severity. Those whose function it is to detect crime and arrest criminals can hardly perhaps be expected to take an entirely detached and unprejudiced view of court decisions. The "officer in the case" knows pretty well whether the person he has delivered up for judgment is a bad wrong'un or a not-so-bad wrong'un. He knows also—perhaps more precisely than the Bench—how far the hard-luck story or the professions of penitence which may be advanced in court are genuine. His view of the accused's deserts may also be coloured—quite wrongly of course—by the amount of time and trouble that have been expended in laying him by the heels. If these various considerations lead him to look for a stiff sentence and the prisoner is bound over or let off lightly, it is perhaps understandable that the officer should feel a slight sense of personal grievance.

It may be that not many police officers give the difficult subject

of penology any very profound thought. The deterrent effect of punishment looms larger in their minds than the reformatory possibilities. A crook "put away" for five years is from their point of view better than a crook put away for three years. If some particular crimes, such as bag-snatching or robbery with violence, became prevalent in their locality, they hanker after a few "exemplary sentences".

A few years ago I had a long talk with a senior police officer on this subject. He had clearly thought and read about it from time to time but did not—any more than I—pose as an authority. We had been dining together and the subject arose out of a black-market case in which, judging from the newspaper report, the punishments awarded seemed to be amazingly inadequate. The case related to big sales of a controlled commodity at inflated prices (after it had been partially cornered) with the usual cooking of books to conceal the transactions. The penalties appeared to be rather less than the actual profits estimated on the transactions proved.

"I would have sent all those merchants to jug for ten years," said my friend.

"I'm not so sure," said I, "why should the country feed them and house them for ten years? I'd much sooner hit them in their pockets. But it ought to be such a bang that they wouldn't come round for a few years."

"But there's a legal limit on fines. Not exceeding so much, according to the offence."

"Yes, I know. That's one of the troubles. It's damned unfair and it makes the fine practically useless in a whole lot of cases. One fellow can pay the maximum without turning a hair, whilst another is pretty well knocked out by half of it."

"Yes, it doesn't work too well. But they seem to be able to impose pretty big fines in some of these black-market offences."

"They can, but even then the fine has to be related to the illegal transactions that can be proved, which may be only a fraction of what the man has actually made before he got caught out."

"But you must have some limits surely?"

"I see no reason for any limit except the offender's capacity to pay. I look at it this way. The possession of property in a community is only possible through the operation of the laws and through the protection afforded by the law enforcement machinery—the police, the courts and so forth. If a citizen tries to make himself rich, or

richer, illegally, that is to say in defiance of these same laws, he surely forfeits any right to hold any property whatever."

"You are really suggesting sequestration of property?"

"Yes, but only in really bad cases. I don't see why you shouldn't. It's quite logical."

"What do you call 'really bad cases'?"

"Don't ask me to be too precise. Perhaps there wouldn't be many cases in peace-time, only the big swindlers. But in war-time or whilst controls and rationing are still on, there are plenty. The man who tries to make big money illegally out of such conditions surely deserves to be outlawed in the sense of being deprived of the protection of the law which enables him to possess what he has got. A friend of mine who has had to do with the drafting of some of these war-time regulations told me that, as soon as a new one came out, a lot of gentry, often with very un-British-sounding names, would get busy with schemes not merely to find a way round but also to make quick profits out of the situation. If you could call it 'looting', which it is really, you could impose the death penalty. I'm not suggesting that."

"But your plan would have rather curious results. The fine in one case might be a hundred pounds and in another fifty thousand for the same offence."

"Yes, that's perfectly true. But isn't it also perfectly fair? You would be relating the penalty to the offender and his capacity to pay and not to the offence. The trouble with the present system is that it fixes the maximum 'price' of each offence without any regard to the effect on the offender."

"Well, the idea sounds all right in theory, but it wouldn't be very easy to apply. How are you going to get at the capacity to pay?"

"I'm not sure that that would be so difficult. It would take a certain amount of time, of course. Skilled C.I.D. officers would have to be turned on to discover the convicted man's assets and report to the court. Most kinds of property are rather hard to conceal though no doubt some of these slick gentry would get round this as well. Anyway the officers would do their best. They would report to the court that the assets appeared to be, say, £10,000. The Court would then decide. In a thoroughly bad case the penalty would be the whole lot, or pretty nearly. In less bad cases, half or three-quarters."

"What would you do if the convicted person declined to pay?"

"Then he'd have to go to prison, not for a definite term but until he paid up. You'd have to give him reasonable time and a right of

appeal, of course. But I don't mind betting that 99 per cent of them would pay sooner than go to jug for an indefinite term."

"I'm afraid you'd never get your idea through our law-makers."

"No, I doubt if they'd swallow it, though more and more people are coming round to the idea that imprisonment is a thoroughly bad form of punishment and that every possible alternative ought to be tried first. I think it was a policeman who said many years ago that there are two kinds of people in our prisons—those who ought never to have gone in and those who ought never to come out."

"I see his idea, but like most smart sayings it is only half true."

"I agree. I expect it was truer when he said it than it is now. Prisons have improved and courts aren't so haphazard as they used to be in awarding sentences. There weren't any Borstals, approved schools or probation officers in those days. Most people agree now that you should do everything you can to keep the young anyway out of prison. More often than not, it is the community's fault more than theirs that they have gone off the rails."

"Meaning bad housing and all that?"

"Yes, bad housing, lack of proper playing fields, clubs and other outlets for the adventure spirit. There's a certain percentage of devil in every healthy boy, I believe. The Huns knew that, and by judicious development produced youngsters to run their Belsens and to enjoy the job. The same youngsters brought up on decent lines and given the safety valve of kicking footballs or punching other youngsters' noses with gloves, would no doubt have become quite tolerable human beings in most cases. But now we're on the subject of youngsters, tell me this, Mr. Policeman. You've had a certain amount of experience of juvenile crime. What's your view about corporal punishment?"

"In schools I'm all for it. I had it myself, and I think it did me good. A short sharp pain applied more or less at once is, I believe, the best and most appropriate way of dealing with a healthy boy who has allowed his 'Devil' as you call it, to obtrude in a wrong direction."

"I'm with you there, but not for bad work or idleness. I was beaten when I was at school for poor performance in my studies. I didn't realize it at the time, but I did later, that the person who ought to have been beaten was the master who completely failed to secure my interest in any of the things he pretended to teach. I wasn't idle by nature and only ordinarily stupid. When I found a man who

knew how to stimulate my interest, I worked like a young horse. Sorry, you were saying . . .”

“I was going on to juvenile crime. It’s awfully difficult to generalize. There are cases where a beating would seem to be the perfect answer. The little devils who steal things they don’t want or smash up things provided for public use, just for the sake of smashing them up. It may be someone else’s fault that they are like that, but that does not alter the fact that they have got to be sharply discouraged. The form of discouragement they will respond to most readily is probably a hiding. All the same, I am not in favour of police birchings for several reasons. It’s too solemn and pompous and too long after the event. To the sensitive lad, and perhaps to some not so sensitive, the suspense and the fright might do permanent harm. Another point is that the boy who has been solemnly beaten in a police station is liable to become a little hero amongst his small companions, and he may feel constrained to live up to the part by further and more daring escapades. Then again, is it reasonable to expect a large number of juvenile courts to discriminate with absolute wisdom between the cases in which a beating is safe and appropriate and those in which it will do more harm than good? And lastly, the police themselves hate the job. Either they do it thoroughly and feel like sadistic brutes or they are content to inflict a slight temporary discomfort, in which case the ‘subject’ in effect remains unpunished.

“I remember a case in south-west London some years ago when, quite unexpectedly, the police were called upon to birch a couple of boys. They had not had a case for years and for some time they couldn’t find the weapon. Eventually it was unearthed from its hiding-place and was found to be so dried and brittle with age that when a constable gave it a few trial swings, bits flew all over the room. There wasn’t time to get a fresh one and the net result was that the boys got a few quite ridiculous blows with the stump of the fast-disintegrating instrument of torture and left the Station covered with smiles. This did not prevent a question being asked in the House about the brutal punishment inflicted.”

“Then I gather that you would wash out corporal punishment as a legal penalty for juveniles?”

“Yes, I would. What I would like to see, though I suppose it isn’t practical politics, is this. When a lad appears before a juvenile court, the magistrates may decide to let him off with a warning or put him on probation or what not. If he is of the little tough-guy

type I would like to hear the magistrate say: 'Now, you can go, my boy, and, Constable, on the way out will you please give him a couple with that cane just to remind him of his visit.' No formality, no terror, no delay, and no hero business, but just something to convince him that it would be pleasanter not to go back to that court. The trouble is now that a lot of these little blighters know that the chance of anything really unpleasant happening to them if they get caught by the police is very small and they have nothing to fear."

"You think they ought to have something to fear?"

"I do indeed. I am old-fashioned enough to believe in discipline and to believe that there must be an element of fear in *all* discipline. Human nature being what it is, and especially boy nature, I think that, even in the home, parental love and moral influence and all that won't quite do the trick by themselves. There must be a perfectly healthy fear—or apprehension if you like—of what father will do if I kick over the traces. It's the same with grown men, not only in the Forces, but in offices, factories and so forth. They must be a wee bit afraid of the boss or things won't go as they should. I don't know about girls. No experience. But that's my view about men and boys."

"Well, I think I agree with you. We've only touched two minor aspects of the big problem of punishment and the solutions we advocate are both quite unlikely to be adopted. Have a drink."

CHAPTER VIII

DEPORTMENT AND LANGUAGE

POLICE live almost continuously in the limelight. In real life, as on the stage, if there is a riot, a private brawl, a street accident or a person throwing a fit, sooner or later the centre of the stage will include a police officer. He comes upon the scene slowly and ponderously. It is part of his training that he should do so. This feature of his deportment is of real value both to himself and to the assembled citizens. If he moves slowly and considers carefully before he acts, taking scant notice of his many excited advisers, he spreads an atmosphere of calm, allays panic and makes the fusspots look a little ridiculous. Incidentally, the leisureliness of his own movements gives him time to think and serves as a natural corrective against ill-considered action. His obvious self-possession acts also as a reinforcement to his position of authority.

The British policeman shows at his best in dealing with a private brawl. Some years ago I was working late one night in a first-floor flat in a quiet inner London suburb, when the sound of angry voices drew me to the window. From this point of vantage—as it were from the front row of the dress circle—I then enjoyed ten minutes of unrehearsed human drama. The stage was excellently lighted by a street lamp and in the still night air the voices of the actors reached me clearly except when too large a number elected to say their pieces at the same time. I forget the details now, but the affair was a sort of overflow meeting of a dispute which had started earlier in a local pub. The actors were roughly divided into two factions and at least one of the principal performers was clearly “under the influence”. There was a car also on the stage and the gentleman who had most noticeably “drink taken” was said to have been driving it.

There had clearly been blows (as evidenced by handkerchiefs held to noses and swollen faces) and a resumption of active hostilities seemed likely at any moment.

Such was the situation when P.C. Q.459 Smith appeared ponderously on the scene. Both parties and many spectators hurried to offer most helpful advice, more particularly directed to the immediate apprehension of other persons. "He's drunk in charge of a car," shouted one. "Unprovoked assault, that's what it is," offered another. "That lousy — pinched my bloody 'and-bag," screamed a lady.

For some time "the law" maintained a majestic silence, listening patiently to all parties and obviously sorting out the situation in his well-trained (if perhaps slow-moving) mind. The tumult gradually died down; the chance of a further "breach of the peace" became more remote; tension was relaxed and the interest of all parties was now focused upon the officer's action. Would he blow his whistle to summon help? Would he run a few of them in? If so, which would he select?

"That your car?" he said, at last, facing a man with a cut lip.

"No," replied cut-lip, "I come with 'im. 'E's driving," indicating an apparently sober and undamaged party.

"Then drive," said the officer emphatically to the person indicated.

"Op in, both of you and push off or I'll . . ."

"What about my bloody 'and-bag?" shrieked the lady—who was apparently a companion of cut-lip's.

"Now then, you," said the officer portentously to the car driver. "You heard me. Take all your lot away—and quick—or it may be the worse for you."

It was enough. They bundled in, the car jerked off down the street followed by the jeers and imprecations of the opposing faction; the crowd slowly dissolved and peace reigned once more in — Crescent.

Ten minutes later I found the officer leaning up against a lamp-post entering brief particulars of the "incident" in his note-book. I congratulated him on his masterly handling of the affair—at which he seemed pleased but slightly surprised. He didn't believe in cluttering up the cells and the courts unnecessarily and the obvious way of resolving the situation without arrests was to eliminate the only element which had the means of rapid disappearance at hand.

One of the standing gibes against the police (second only to the size of their feet and the knee-flexing movement) is their addiction to the use of long words in reports and evidence. A policeman never goes or walks; he always "proceeds". He never sees a thing happen, he "witnesses the occurrence"—and so on and so on.

Though I have often joined in the merriment aroused by extreme examples of this peculiarity, I am quite convinced that it would be a mistake to destroy the tradition. It is part of the "business"; rightly or wrongly it helps to impress and to produce an atmosphere of dignity and authority. Quite illogical no doubt. I can see Sir Alan Herbert rise in his wrath and prove conclusively that the simplest words are the most dignified. I don't attempt to dispute such a proposition, but I feel nevertheless in my bones that the use of a certain stereotyped phraseology (which happens to include a number of long words and stilted expressions) has a real value and should be preserved.

Incidentally it provides food for mirth from time to time and what greater service to the human race can there be than that?

Take an example. An oldish constable had to give evidence of having arrested the "prisoner in the dock". These were his words—produced in an even continuous monotone:

"At 4.53 p.m. on the 30th ultimo I proceeded to number four hundred and thirty-two Whitechapel Street, the residence of the accused. I ascended to the second floor. I entered the room occupied by the accused. The accused was lyin' on a bed. I says to him 'You come with me'. He says to me 'You go to Hell'. I *declined* and arrested the accused."

In simple English we have:

"Last Thursday afternoon I went to 432, Whitechapel Street, where John Brown lives. I found him in a room on the second floor and arrested him. His only remark was 'Go to Hell'."

Personally I greatly prefer the first version. It has a certain majesty. It "goes" with wigs and gowns, trumpeters and black caps. It should, I maintain, be cherished as a real part of the paraphernalia of justice.

In written reports of course the case is different but if police are occasionally a little prone to an extravagant and flowery style of prose composition, it is fair to attribute it, in part at least, to the influence of their training as witnesses. They can hardly be expected to give a written account in simple language if the spoken account is expected to be long-worded and majestic.

Also of course there is a natural human tendency (which our educational system fails to correct) to use longer words and more complicated sentences when writing than when speaking.

Sir Alan Herbert in his delightful writings on this topic suggests

that it is an indication of woolly and confused thinking. This I suggest is quite wrong. People who are direct, simple and brief in ordinary speech and thought, quite commonly seem to regard it as necessary, as soon as they've got a pen in their hands, to seek out long words and compose impossibly elaborate sentences. This is not any more the case with policemen or Civil Servants or business men than it is with any other class of persons.

The following paragraph appeared in a letter received from an ordinary member of the public not very long ago:

"May I also utilize this occasion to state that in my opinion following an air raid warning in another Borough that the syrens on Police Cars from my own observation, assuming that they do serve a purpose, however, outweighed by mental reaction, and the speed necessary to produce the sounds emitted, are anything but productive of that state of calmness and also orderliness which should prevail as an antithesis to panic."

Sometimes police methods of expression have a pleasing euphemistic quality.

Mr. John Jones had been employed by the *Daily* — and had been sacked. The police way of stating this simple fact was: "Mr. John Jones was at a former period in the employment of the *Daily* —. He did not leave of his own volition."

Again, it would be hard to improve on the following official description of a pompous ass:

"I formed the impression that Mr. — was the type of person to over-estimate his own importance."

I liked also the gentle suggestion of prevarication in:

"After prolonged conversation with Mr. — I reached the conclusion that he is prone to handle the truth somewhat loosely."

Another police officer who had been required to explain his action in making use of certain unoccupied police flats without obtaining permission, finished a two-page report with the following entirely satisfying paragraph:

"The decision to permit the use of these flats was precipitated by a set of unparalleled circumstances and was based on exigencies calling for expedition and initiative."

"Explanation accepted," was all one could say to that.

Then there was a dramatic description of an unfortunate woman who had shown signs of mental disorder.

"She appeared," said the report, "to be suffering from a depression of spirits, was suspicious of everyone and made jargonic remarks and statements. The normal rhythm of her organs appeared to be generally upset."

To a perfectly nice mind perhaps there would be no possibility of misunderstanding in an officer's statement relating to a crowd which had stood on a pavement for a number of hours:

"By 6 p.m.," he said, "this crowd had clearly reached saturation point."

Then there was the case of a P.C. with the rather unfortunate name of "Bottom". He decided that he would like to change it and made application for permission. The Sub-Divisional Inspector in his covering report said: "His desire to change his name is genuine, the main reason being the meaning and construction which can be, and is, placed upon it."

A somewhat similar strain is noticeable in an officer's description of an accident that had befallen an official typewriter in a Divisional office. He explained that the machine had been dropped whilst he was moving it to a desk "in order to enable him to manipulate the same according to the recognized tenets."

Reporting on a complaint of discourtesy an inspector wrote:

"The allegation of incivility is merely concomitant to the fact of being the subject of interrogation and is not borne out by investigation."

And in rebutting a charge of rough handling by a P.C. another inspector said: "At no time during my presence did P.C. —

employ any more restrictory powers than was necessary to control the proceedings."

A delightful article in *The Times* some years ago, dealing with the question of the language employed by police officers and in Government Departments said:

"We do not expect the metropolitan police to speak the English of Jeremy Taylor, but that hardly seems a reason for restricting them to words of one syllable, especially as the drunk and disorderlies are not denied the freedom of a rich and copious vocabulary."

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"Grand words are part of an official code, which is, almost necessarily, as uniform as their official dress. A constable on duty behaves more stiffly than when he is off it, and it seems right that he should speak more stiffly, too; the free and easy language of his domestic hearth would be incongruous with the solemnity of a police court."

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"For my part I would jealously preserve every variety of professional speech, as I would every variety of professional garb and etiquette. They attest the reality of history and add to the fun of life."

CHAPTER IX

THE ANATOMY OF POLICE

THERE was a pleasant drawing in *Punch* some years ago of an indignant American cinema actress rising in wrath out of her car and addressing a constable who is "taking particulars" in consequence of some offence committed by the actress's chauffeur.

"And, listen, big boy, here's another thing you can put down in that lil' ole book of yours. 'Miss Lydia de Grass takes back every word she said about you wunnerful London policemen.'"

The moral of this seems to be that it all depends on the point of view. Everyone is liable to argue from the particular to the general. Careless and impetuous motorists may regard the police as an interfering and troublesome lot who spend their time looking for "technical offences" on the road when they should be catching thieves. Those whose houses have been burgled are inclined to criticize if the burglar is not at once arrested and—more important still—the property recovered. Those who spend their time losing themselves, their dogs or their umbrellas may be impressed by police courtesy and the trouble that is taken to assist them.

Quite rightly of course, we ask a good deal of our policemen. We expect them to have the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job and the strength of Samson. To these must be added a profound knowledge of law, perfect manners, a cool head, a warm heart and a thick skin. The fact is of course that there "ain't no such person". Recruiting Boards do their best and Training Schools try to mould the raw material into the right shape and to inject the right ideas. Only a small percentage (about ten per cent if I remember right) of the applicants for enrolment as constables are accepted and some of these drop out during the training period. But mortal man is a fallible creation. In a policeman there must be an element of toughness to stand the physical strain of night duty, thief catching and crowd control. Toughness and sweet temper do not always go

together and the keen mind does not always accompany the strong body.

If therefore a member of the Force fails in some way to act as we feel the perfect policeman should act, we may well ponder a little before we indulge in wholesale condemnations.

The ordinary member of the public derives his impression of the police and their work mainly from what he sees in the street, supplemented by sometimes inaccurate descriptions of crime detection contained in detective novels. The street duties may not seem to the onlooker to be specially arduous or difficult and the detection of "big" crimes is the affair of a few highly-trained specialists. To supplement these impressions I ask you to accompany me into a police station and see the sort of thing that goes on there. The time and place selected are admittedly exceptional. About 11.30 p.m. on a Saturday night at Vine Street Police Station (now closed) some few years ago. It was boat-race night and there had also been a soccer match between England and Scotland. I visited the Station on this particular night because there had been a bit of trouble about the conduct of undergraduates from Oxford and Cambridge who on a previous similar occasion had carried a joke too far, done a good deal of damage and scared the life out of a number of unsuspecting suburbanites who were seeking quiet entertainment in the West End. A solemn warning of increased police severity had been conveyed to the university authorities and it was a matter of interest to see whether the evening's "intake" at Vine Street would be greater or less than on the previous boat-race or rugger night.

Actually, as it turned out, the warning had evidently had the desired effect and not more than one or two undergraduates were brought in. But that did not prevent the evening from being full of interest.

Let me describe what I saw. The charge-room was more or less permanently occupied by an officer taking charges against a series of arrested persons and I spent most of my time observing what happened next door in the centre office, which is normally used for a variety of clerical duties. On this particular night, because of the briskness of business, the office had to serve all purposes, including that of an overflow for the charge-room.

It was not a very big office and most of it was occupied by a large centre table, round which half a dozen uniformed officers were seated, filling up forms, writing reports, entering lost property and so on. At the same time three separate charges were being taken in such

vacant spaces as could be found. In one corner a group of tam-o'-shantered soccer fans from Glasgow, very much the worse for wear, were trying to remember their names and addresses. Elsewhere three alleged students, not hailing as they would no doubt wish to convey, from either of our older universities, had compelled an unwilling constable to arrest them by persisting in the annoyance of peaceful citizens. The chilling effect on them of Vine Street's unsympathetic atmosphere was already apparent. The young prisoners were inclined to be tearful and rather scared. A little further along, a foreign-looking gentleman charged with picking pockets was loudly protesting his innocence and trying to explain why he found it necessary to carry five purses. Cell bells rang persistently and the six doors with which the room was provided were swinging and banging as people passed in and out. As a sort of drone or background to all this, there came from a far corner of the room the intermittent screams and hysterical obscenities of a small, half-naked prostitute. A large unruffled C.I.D. sergeant was doing his best to restrain her evident desire to leave the mark of her teeth and nails upon him.

In this atmosphere, all the elaborate paraphernalia of taking charges in accordance with complicated regulations had to be carried out precisely, with no item omitted. The numerous rights of the citizen on whom the police have laid their hands, the safeguards for his liberty and comfort, must be scrupulously remembered and attended to, or serious trouble might ensue. Particularly was this so at Vine Street during that period. Events not yet forgotten had impressed the officers working there with the danger of putting a foot wrong. Questions in the House and even motions on the adjournment had arisen from cases which appeared at the time to present no unusual features.

By way of light relief to this sombre picture, I may perhaps describe before we leave Vine Street Police Station an incident which occurred in the charge-room itself a little later the same night. For a short period the Home Secretary himself was present. He too was interested to see how the undergraduates would react to the warning sent to the university authorities. He also perhaps welcomed an opportunity of observing Vine Street in action in view of the spotlight which had played upon it so recently. Under the great man's eye a somewhat embarrassed sergeant had to take a charge from a diminutive Scot who had consumed more alcohol than his small body could properly accommodate.

"What is your name and address?" asked the sergeant.

"Ma mither is a harrrd-worrrking woman and she lives in Kil-marrnock."

"Yes, but what is your name?"

"Ma mither is a harrrd-worrrking woman and she lives in Kil-marrnock."

So it went on for some time. Whatever question the sergeant put, the result was the same: "Ma mither . . . etc. etc." It was like a gramophone record.

Then, unexpectedly, after a pause whilst the sergeant was pondering his next step, the fuddled brain produced a new thought.

"If you draw a white line upon the floorr, no drrunken man can walk along it." Then turning to the Home Secretary, "Will your Honour draw a white line upon the floorr?"

The Home Secretary declined somewhat huffily to involve himself in such an experiment, but he produced a quite sensible though unorthodox solution. "Has he a return ticket?" "Yes." "Where to?" "Glasgow." "When is the next train?" "12.30 a.m." "Right. Get a cab. Send an officer with him. He'll just catch it. Here's the fare."

A bit of luck for the wee Scot who, but for this Ministerial intervention, would have spent his week-end in a cell and appeared before the magistrate on Monday morning.

Vine Street Police Station has now passed from us. It was out of date and fell under the Trenchard rebuilding axe. Its place has been taken by a spacious up-to-date station at the north end of Savile Row. The tailors would not hear of the new building being called Savile Row Station. Such a title would in some obscure way be bad for trade. So we have "West End Central Station" instead, and with the change the glamour seems to have departed. It used to be a matter of pride for a respectable member of society to recall the night he spent in Vine Street in 1893. It may be still. But it is doubtful whether a prosaic steel and concrete building with a name suggesting a post office will ever have quite the same attraction.

But I have strayed again from my topic, which was a consideration of what sort of man we wish our police officer to be. Briefly we look for a tough angel of high intelligence and much learning. Whether the future supply will meet the demand is highly doubtful. Not many men join the police because they have a "call" to do so. It's a fine, virile profession with plenty of variety and scope (as well as

great tracts of nothingness). But the number who join for that reason is probably not very great. The major attraction has been security and an early pension. I had occasion a short while ago to interview a large number of sergeants and constables from provincial Forces in connection with certain post-war appointments. One of the questions I put to nearly all of them was, "What made you join the police?" A few had joined because their fathers were policemen. Others gave the stereotyped reply which they no doubt thought would go down well with a Selection Board—"I was always interested in police work." But the great majority said frankly that work was slack in their previous occupation or that there didn't seem to be much certainty of continued employment in it. The police service offered security and a chance of advancement. I know of one officer, who rose to a high rank in the Metropolitan Force, whose reason for originally joining as a constable was that he thought he would be able to get a lot of wrestling in the police—not with criminals "resisting arrest" but with brother officers in the gymnasiums and in competitions.

One way and another candidates for the police come, as might be expected, from a great variety of sources, occupations and origins.

If there is a policeman type, and no doubt there is, this must be the result firstly of selection at the start, and secondly of the imprint on appearance which seems to be sometimes (not always of course) made by occupation. Every profession and calling seems to produce a certain proportion of typical specimens—the horsey type, the military type, the legal type and so on, and there is no reason why police should be any exception to the rule. When candidates are being vetted, one of the things they have to do is to appear before a board who decide whether they are the right type or, perhaps more correctly, whether they are the wrong type. It is not so much a matter of seeking a standard pattern as of rejecting unsuitables, those whose appearance or personality seem not to include the essential elements which go to the make-up of a policeman.

What sort of a person then is a typical policeman? We have discussed what we want him to be, but "wishful thinking" and hard fact may sometimes differ. There is no need to waste time on appearance as the London bobby's exterior is as well known as the Nelson Column. Larger than the average—in length, breadth and thickness—usually clean-shaven though there are moustaches and a very few beards. Two myths may be discarded immediately. One relates to his feet and the other to his girth. In neither respect does the typical

constable nowadays present any excessive development. His movements are designedly slow, his speech is audible but seldom loud, he is proof against surprise and seldom exhibits either emotion or excitement. He is not easily deflected from his purpose either by advice or abuse. Witticisms or sarcasms produce no visible impression on him and he takes a poor view of self-importance. He will meet courtesy with courtesy and rudeness (usually) with coldness. He is inclined to be suspicious. Daily contacts with the abnormal induce a readiness to see or suspect abnormality. Familiarity with human frailty inevitably induces a degree of cynicism. I have noticed this even in quite senior policemen. Those who have spent many years dealing with crime detection are liable to take a somewhat warped view of their fellow humans. They have seen so much dishonesty that they are prone to overlook the possibility of honesty except when induced by safeguards or the fear of detection. Similarly, some of those whose duty it is to deal with traffic offences in large numbers come to regard the motorist as a malevolent and ruthless creature who must be constantly restrained from misbehaviour on the road by punishment or the fear of punishment. There are, it is true, a certain number of drivers who will not respond to advice, cautions or courtesy. If for some reason police vigilance is relaxed—as for example during the 1940-1 air raids on London, when police had too much to do to bother very much about traffic—the standard of driving goes down with a bang. It seems to get around in a mysterious way very quickly that it is safe to exceed the speed limit or crash the lights, the risk of detection being small. No doubt it is only a small proportion of drivers who refuse to drive decently unless constantly harried with prosecutions, fines and endorsement of licences. But the man who has to study the accident statistics or to deal with offences in bulk tends occasionally to condemn the whole breed of motor drivers and to assume a fundamental evilness in all of them.

It is part of the policeman's training as well as of his experience to be suspicious. His powers of observation are not directed to the beauties of nature, the flight of birds or the architectural features of the local churches. He is—quite rightly of course—more concerned with the security of locks and fastenings, the dubious movement of prowlers, the vagaries of traffic, the obstruction of the highway, or the mischievous antics of small boys.

Those who have to administer their affairs are liable to gain the impression that the suspicious attitude developed in their minds



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vis-à-vis the public has an unfortunate effect also on their relations with those in authority over them. Things done for their benefit are likely to be scrutinized and criticized with the greatest care, the first reaction being that there's sure to be a catch in it somewhere. It is no doubt too much to expect that a somewhat cynical turn of mind will be trustful in some directions whilst remaining distrustful in others. It may be also that the unwillingness of authorities to give away anything except under pressure produces a cautious attitude in accepting unsolicited benefits.

Other qualities and defects which are to be found in the typical police officer resemble, I should say, those normally found in responsible British citizens with, we hope, a generous allowance of qualities, and defects in short supply. Amongst his assets are kindness, good-temper, readiness to face danger, fair-mindedness and a fondness for animals, children and sport. His liabilities are an inclination to grumble (like most of us) and a somewhat pessimistic outlook.

In connection with this anatomization of police, it may not be out of place to try to answer a question which has been put to me many times and which most people connected with the police must have had to answer at intervals.

The question is "Why don't the police recruit specially for their detective forces?" It arises no doubt as a rule from the reading of crime fiction, in which so often the main character—typified by Sherlock Holmes—is a person whose brilliant deductive faculties, based on a close study of the most unlikely subjects, lead him to lightning conclusions which entirely eclipse the comparatively pedestrian efforts of the police detectives.

The unravelling of criminal mysteries, it is argued, calls for such highly specialized qualities that there is little hope of producing "super-detectives" from a Force whose recruits are selected for somewhat different purposes. Would it not be much better to discover, in some manner unspecified, ready-made possessors of these special qualities and appoint them direct to high posts in the detective organization?

The crude answer to this very natural question is, "Your idea, good sir (or madam as the case may—probably—be) sounds fine, but it just wouldn't work."

First of all, it is not the case that the detection of crime depends to any great extent on brilliant deductions. The qualities that go to the make-up of a good detective are experience, perseverance, memory

and, perhaps most important, that intangible quality generally known as "flair".

A short time after my arrival at Scotland Yard in 1927, I happened to be in the Commissioner's room when he was discussing a murder then under investigation with that notable detective, Chief Constable Wensley. Wensley was at that time the biggest of what the Press were pleased to call the "big four" (since expanded to "big five" and sometimes "big—some other number").

The impression I got at that interview was most unexpected. If this were the biggest of the bunch, the others must be pretty small I felt—not in physical but in mental stature. His speech was slow and seemed to reflect a slow mind. His method of reasoning seemed ponderous and dull. If he "had anything" it was certainly not in the shop-window.

I was quite wrong. He was in fact an extremely successful detective and success in crime detection can be precisely weighed by results. He had achieved what he had achieved, not by "brilliance" but by astuteness, memory and perseverance. He never forgot and he never let go. In a big case, particularly if accompanied by much publicity, the investigating officers are often almost submerged with bits of information, any one of which may conceivably lead them in the direction they want to go. An enormous amount depends on the selection of the most hopeful line to follow. Wensley had the reputation of possessing an almost uncanny power of discrimination in this field. Experience and memory, supplemented by our old friend "flair" were his long suits. He reached his high position—as do all the super-detectives—by the long, hard road. He joined as a constable, did ordinary beat duty in uniform for a time, put his name down for plain-clothes work, was tried out on simple inquiries, became a detective constable, sergeant, second-class inspector, first-class inspector, chief inspector, superintendent, chief constable. Each and all of these promotions were earned—earned by producing results. There was no other way. A detective, like anyone else, may have his share of good luck; he may in individual instances attract attention and gain credit in excess of his true merit, but no amount of good luck or favour will get him to the top, or anywhere near it.

Take the Criminal Investigation Department of the Metropolitan Force and visualize it as a broad-based pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid are the uniform constables—in normal times about fifteen or sixteen thousand of them. Approximately one in twenty of

them is selected for detective work because (1) he asks for it and (2) he is found fit for it after trial. Most of the detective constables become sergeants; some of the sergeants become second-class inspectors; some of the second-class inspectors become first-class inspectors—and so on to the top. As you go up the scale, the numbers in each grade become smaller and smaller. At the top the number is 1 Commander, 1 Deputy Commander and 10 Superintendents. To get a truer picture of our pyramid, the base ought really to be about ten times broader because only about ten per cent of applicants for admission as uniform constables are accepted.

It may sound ridiculous, but I think, if you work it out, you will agree with me that it must take something like 13,000 applicants to produce one senior C.I.D. officer, i.e. superintendent or above. This is a pretty fierce process of elimination. Many are called but few indeed are chosen.

The second objection to the direct recruitment of ready-made Sherlocks is that there aren't any, or, if there are, no means of discovering them has yet been devised. There are no diplomas in crime detection available in our universities. You can't tell a good crime detector by looking at him or even by putting him under the microscope of a Selection Board. Crime detection can't be practised in the home or learned from text-books. Before a candidate could be accepted he would have to be able to convince incredulous hard-headed policemen that he had something to sell them. He might have the right sort of brain, flair, memory, persistence and so forth. But he could not possibly have any practical experience and it would take some years to discover whether he was any good.

An experiment in direct recruitment was in fact made many years ago in the Metropolitan Force. I have found no record of it and cannot therefore say whether the trial given was extensive. Anyway, those responsible for it regarded it as a failure and the idea was abandoned.

Let it not be supposed for a moment that I advocate on the detective side, any more than in other branches of police work, rigid adherence to the rung-by-rung system of advancement. What might be called "rung-jumping" should be *possible*. Every man should have a *chance* of taking two or more rungs in one stride. I have elaborated this point in discussing the College in another chapter. It is enough to say here that the possibility of quick advancement is certainly no less important in detective work than in any other department of police

activity. A proportion of the top jobs should always be held by youngish men and that can only be achieved by giving a selected few exceptional men an opportunity of making quick progress. Pitt was Prime Minister at twenty-four. It can't be necessary or healthy for *all* C.I.D. superintendents to be in the region of fifty or more. It's a long and tiring journey up that ladder. To get to the top at all is a feat of endurance. To get there fresh and unfatigued is a physical impossibility.

But whatever plan is adopted, with or without the possibility of short-cuts, the system of selecting at each stage from a large number, and making that selection on the basis of results achieved, is more likely to produce the men required than any other scheme yet offered.

It has no doubt been clear that in most of what has been said in this chapter, it is the police-man rather than the police-woman that has been in mind. The reader may be able to guess to some extent how far the fact of belonging to the same profession produces the same characteristics, but there are of course differences between the duties of the men and those of the women and a brief consideration of this somewhat controversial subject of the place of women in the police organization may be of interest.

Opinions in this field of argument are liable to be strongly held, not only by people directly concerned with police work, but also by many others, particularly those who have views for or against feminism.

I have to confess that for some years I ranged myself with the "antis". I argued then, as many still do, that almost everything that a policewoman can do can be done equally well, or better, by men, whereas some of the things that the man can do are beyond the capacity of the woman. I did not at any time hold the view that there was no place at all for women in the police organization, but I saw little justification for anything in the nature of a "Force" of women even in London.

The Police (Women) Regulations, which have statutory force, enumerate the duties which *may* be assigned to policewomen in the following words:

"Patrol duty.

"Duties in connection with women and children reported missing, found ill, injured, destitute or homeless, and those who have been the victims of sexual offences, or are in immoral surroundings.

"Taking statements from women and children in cases of sexual offences.

"Duties in connection with the conveyance of women and children to and from hospitals, poor law institutions, police stations, prisons, remand homes, and approved schools.

"Watching female prisoners or women who have attempted suicide detained in hospitals, etc.

"Attendance on women and children in court.

"Searching and attending female prisoners.

"Clerical work.

"Plain-clothes duty and detective work."

The latitude allowed by the wording of this regulation is so great that it might have been simpler to say that women can be used for any sort of police duties except those in which weight and physical strength are essential. The two items "Patrol duty" and "Plain-clothes duty and detective work" cover between them a large proportion of normal police activities. An officer on patrol in uniform, whether man or woman, may be called upon to deal with anything from a murder to a lost dog and when detective work in plain clothes is added, there really is not a great deal left.

Women police would obviously not be included in parties detailed to cope with disturbances or riots and they would not be sent alone to arrest criminals, even women, if there was any likelihood of resistance.

The only items in the official list which seemed to me (before I was "converted") to call for the assistance of women were searching female prisoners and taking statements from women and children in cases of sexual offences.

As to searching, there can be no two opinions. Women have always been searched by women and for this and similar purposes the service of a person known as a "police matron" has been available at stations. These matrons have no official status, are not members of the Force and have no police powers. Though no difficulties have arisen, so far as I can remember, it would no doubt be better that such duties should be performed by policewomen if available.

The taking of statements from women and children in sexual offences is a more contentious matter.

I need not enter into details of those unpleasant affairs. It is enough to say that the investigation of certain crimes or alleged crimes entails obtaining from women and children who may have been either

witnesses or victims, accounts of what they saw or suffered. There can be little doubt that where children are involved the right sort of sympathetic and understanding woman is much more likely than a man to obtain the information needed and to do so with the minimum of distress to the child.

The case of the woman witness or victim is not quite so clear. There are those who contend that women who have an unpleasant story to tell are not necessarily more ready to tell it to a woman than to a man, just as many women prefer a man doctor to a woman doctor. The story in such cases often involves some admission of personal guilt, and women who have "fallen" are sometimes "allergic" to other women who have remained erect. They may find it easier to "spill the beans" to a hard-boiled male.

How far this argument is valid, I don't profess to know. The well-trained and experienced policewoman should be able to overcome any such reluctance and it has to be remembered that the male officer usually regards it as desirable to have a woman with him at interviews of this kind, and if a woman is to be present anyway, she may as well do the job by herself. Two listeners are less likely to get at the truth than one.

On this point a Royal Commission said (in 1929): "The presence of a woman as a chaperon may have the advantage of protecting the officer who takes the statement. But, from the point of view of the person making the statement, a mixed audience would seem to be the worst possible arrangement and the most embarrassing which could be devised for the narration of the details of some sexual offence."

However that may be, there is work for women in this field—with children certainly and with adult women sometimes—and this has been recognized for a long time in the Metropolitan area. The cases are happily not numerous and a few women, travelling as necessary from place to place, could deal with them all, though it is hardly reasonable to ask any woman to do such work continuously.

It is not essential that women employed for this purpose should be sworn in as constables and for many years the Metropolitan Force used the services of a very excellent person who was not a member of the Force. But it is undoubtedly better that the work should be done by persons with the full training and status of police officers.

Turning to the other duties enumerated in the regulation, there is still a strong body of opinion, particularly amongst policemen—many of them in high positions—that the employment of women is quite

unnecessary. Personally I have been converted to the opposite view as have, I believe, many senior police officers and others occupying administrative positions, including some Home Secretaries.

One cannot get far in the consideration of this problem without coming up against the necessity of determining the dividing line between crime and immorality. The police are not concerned with morals as such, and some of the work which women police actually do may look very much like an encroachment into that field. The justification must be that the preventive function of police is wide enough to include this type of activity.

I am thinking particularly of efforts made to "save" young women who look like skidding down the slippery slope but haven't actually started, or have not gone very far. Perhaps a young girl, believed to be "innocent", is seen associating with known prostitutes or with others who are likely to lead her in the wrong direction. The policewoman takes an opportunity of making clear to the young woman the sort of risk she is running and the sort of life she is heading for. She may tell the officer—politely or not—to mind her own business; or she may accept the warning and get off the slope.

It is easy to argue that this sort of activity is not police work at all and should be left to rescue societies and other forms of private enterprise. It can hardly even be covered by the widest interpretation of crime-prevention because the thing being prevented, namely prostitution, is not in itself crime.

The reply to this contention—and, I suggest, a good one—is that over-precision in the definition of the police function is undesirable. One of the merits of the accepted definition—the preservation of the public peace, the protection of life and property, and the prevention and detection of crime—is its vagueness. If there is a service which the police are able to render to the public better than anyone else and if that service is allied to their normal functions, it matters not at all whether it can be argued into the authorized definition or not. How can we find room for telling people the way to Charing Cross or what time it is, within the definition? They have no relation to the public peace, life, property or crime.

Warning a young woman of the slope she is on and of what lies at the bottom of it is a reasonable and helpful proceeding and the policewoman is in a better position to do it than anyone else. She knows what she is talking about, she speaks with authority and can give positive as well as negative advice to any who need it.

It might be difficult to justify asking tax-payers and rate-payers to support a force of women for the sole purpose of rescuing other women from moral dangers, but if there are women police, this seems a reasonable service for them to render.

The rest of the duties enumerated in the regulation are all clearly police duties; that is to say they are things that have got to be done and can only be done by police officers. The only question is whether women can do them better than men. Excluding patrol duty and detective work for the moment, I, for one, have now reached the conclusion that, broadly speaking, the answer is "Yes, women are the right agents for these jobs".

Patrol duty, as performed in practice by women police, is confined to certain localities. Only quite a small number of women are available and the Metropolitan Police District covers 700 square miles. They are assigned therefore to places where their assistance is most likely to be of value, whether for keeping an eye on children playing in open spaces or for giving advice and help to women and girls arriving in London with no place to go to, and so on and so forth. In this sort of work they supplement the policeman rather than take his place. They are police officers with specialized knowledge, trained to see things which the men might overlook, and to be at hand to advise people who might hesitate to appeal to the men. From what I have heard of this side of their work I feel that, at any rate in London, it is a worth-while service.

Policewomen also do a valuable job in connection with "women and children reported missing, found ill, injured, destitute or homeless". The number of girls and young women who disappear from their homes without explanation is great and a special index is kept at Scotland Yard with cards for those missing and cards for those found. If for example the police in west London come across a homeless or "stray" girl, they send particulars to the Yard, and it is the business of the clerk who maintains the index to discover whether the particulars given correspond with those of any of the girls reported as missing. Policewomen become very expert in dealing with such cases. It may be that the girl comes from quite a good home and has come away either in a fit of temper or because she was bored and wanted a bit of excitement. She may have heard from a friend that a good time and easy money were to be had in London and she decides to walk out without saying anything to anybody. In such a case probably the policewoman would try to persuade the girl to go back. She would

get into touch with the parents, perhaps go and see them if not too far away, and do her best to ensure a sympathetic reception of the "prodigal daughter". When that won't work, either because the home surroundings are bad or for any other reason, a number of alternatives are available. The policewoman is in touch with the various societies who specialize in receiving or assisting such cases and, if the girl declines to co-operate in any sensible solution offered, she can be brought before a juvenile court as a "young person in need of care or protection". It is then the business of the court to decide what shall be done with her and it has power to enforce its decision.

No doubt this sort of work is not beyond the capacity of men. It must in fact be done by men, so far as it is done at all, in those Forces which have no women. But it is again a specialist type of work. It can't be taken in the stride with other work. Any one case may require someone's undivided attention for several hours, and that someone, to do it properly, must have experience and knowledge which can only be acquired by special instruction and by the handling of actual cases. The question then is whether the someone who is to be turned on when such a case arises should be a man or a woman, and I cannot help feeling that the vast majority of impartial persons would vote for a woman. The case to me seems so clear that it is hardly worth arguing. But I hasten to add that I speak only of London, where the cases are numerous. "Good time girls" tend to gravitate to the big towns—especially the ports—and London naturally gets a lot of them.

It can of course be argued, as in the matter of the young women on the slippery slope dealt with earlier, that this sort of thing might well be left to private societies. I have already given the answer, as I understand it, to this argument and the only additional point is that "missing persons" of any kind have been accepted for years as a police "care", of no less importance than lost dogs (who have their own special legislation). I am almost tempted to follow this line of thought and talk for a while about "missing persons" in general. It is quite an interesting topic but it takes us rather a long way from our subject of women police. I will say only therefore for the comfort of people who unaccountably "mislay" a relation and who in their natural distress may feel that the police attitude in such circumstances is liable to seem rather unhelpful, that the vast majority of persons who disappear suddenly, re-appear in a very short time. There are plenty of cases of people walking out from their homes for what seem to them

to be perfectly good reasons—the man who wants to get away from his wife (or vice versa), the youth who is tired of parental control and so on—and the police have no power to send them back even if they come across them. The police therefore concern themselves only with missing persons thought likely to come to real harm, children, mentally deranged people, very old people and those thought to be suffering from loss of memory. Usually, those capable of looking after themselves must be left to their own devices. If they have gone deliberately with no intention of returning, that is purely their own affair. If not, there is usually some perfectly normal explanation—the lost letter, the undelivered message, or just casualness. These cases straighten themselves out as a rule in a day or two.

The employment of policewomen in plain clothes and on detective work raises no question of principle. A large part of the work involved in the investigation of crime consists of inquiries and observation. The assistance of trained women in this field can be most valuable. Particularly is this so in the case of observations when it is important not to attract attention. In some circumstances a woman is more likely to pass unnoticed than a man and many women are very clever at merging themselves into the background or, if necessary, playing a part. In some Forces fairly extensive use is already made of women for these purposes, but I have not yet heard of any in which independent responsibility for the investigation of important crimes has been given to women.

Speaking with diffidence, as I claim no first-hand experience of crime investigation, I see no reason at all why carefully selected women, given the same thorough training as men receive, should not achieve success in this field of work. I emphasize careful selection because I believe that temperamentally the average woman is not so well fitted as the average man for work in which solid step-by-step cast-iron reasoning is more important than intuition. Those who have ever done cross-word puzzles on the "group system"—several people collaborating—will know what I mean. Broadly speaking the male of the species excels when it is a question of concentrated thought, whilst the female will bang out an answer every now and then almost before the male brain has got going. It isn't always right and, when it is, the reason for its rightness is liable to appear after the solution has been offered. Jumping to conclusions is a dangerous occupation in crime detection. The fact that a man looks like the sort of chap who would do that sort of crime is not important. I won't say that

there is no place ever for the thing called "intuition". But, as with the cross-word puzzle, when the right answer is reached that way, it cannot be accepted as such until it is fully supported by the necessary evidence.

However, it is as dangerous to generalize about women as it is about "the English" or "the Scots". So many individuals refuse to conform to type that any broad assumption of characteristics can constantly be stultified by exceptions.

There are, I feel, two main reasons why women are not more fully used in detective work. The first is that they are not there to use. The supply of women police constantly falls short of the demand. In London the "strength" has for years been below the authorized establishment and the small number available are more likely to be wanted for the other types of duty assigned to women.

This first reason may be sufficient in itself. The second I offer, at the risk of indignant denials, is the survival in some quarters of a certain amount of male prejudice. That this male prejudice does in fact exist at any rate amongst the "rank and file" of policemen is indicated by the attitude of the Federation, which has for years, without any logical arguments, openly opposed any admission of the rights which policewomen undoubtedly have under the law as members of the Force and therefore members of the Federation.

I have always found it difficult to understand how the accredited representatives of the police, whose prime function is to stand up for the rights of their constituents, can reconcile this with a blank denial of interest in one section.

It would, I feel, be only fair to conclude this brief consideration of the employment of women on detective work, by quoting the conclusion reached on the subject by the "Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure", which reported in 1938.

I say it would be fair because the line taken by the Committee, though beautifully non-committal, can only be read as wet-blanketing the aspirations of those who visualize great possibilities for women on the detective side of police work.

What the Committee said was this:

"... We have not found sufficient evidence of any special need for the employment of policewomen as detective officers, or of their special aptitude for this work, to justify us in recommending any departure from the principle which has been consistently

followed hitherto, namely, that the employment of women on police work should be a matter for the discretion of the individual Chief Officers of Police and Police Authorities."

This is a curiously worded paragraph. The Home Office could not in any event compel Chief Constables and Police Authorities to employ women except by the extreme measure of withholding the Government grant, which is only done in clear cases of inefficiency.

On such a point as this, one would have expected the Committee to give a lead, and all they in fact did was to deliver themselves of a couple of platitudes which must have made the feminists see red. It is surely not a question of *need* or *special* aptitude. If these were the tests, women would find themselves excluded from quite a number of the professions and callings which they have now invaded, such, for instance, as the Civil Service, the Bar and Medicine. There was no *need* for them and they could claim no *special* aptitude—greater, that is to say, than that possessed by men.

It is the more curious that this Committee should have taken such a discouraging line seeing that the Royal Commission on "Police Powers and Procedure", which consisted of six men and two women under the Chairmanship of Lord Lee of Fareham, reporting in 1929, had said:

"We are inclined to think that women of the right calibre, if afforded suitable facilities for training, equal to those which are provided for men, would prove to be of great assistance to their male colleagues. There are certain types of cases in which the assistance of women is obviously indispensable, e.g. shop-lifting, fortune-telling. But we should not wish to see the employment of women limited to this somewhat narrow sphere and we consider that they should be afforded adequate opportunities of doing general, as well as special, detective work."

A Royal Commission including such men as Sir Reginald Poole, Sir Howard Frank and Sir Frank Pick could hardly be suspected of having been stampeded by feminists or any other sectional interest and, before leaving the subject of women police, it may be of interest to recall the conclusions they reached, after a full and interesting discussion, on the more general aspects of the employment of women:

“The time is ripe for a substantial increase in the numbers of women police, more particularly in cities for patrol work in uniform.”

“While the decision as to the appointment of women police should be left for local determination, steps should be taken to draw the attention of all Chief Constables and Police Authorities to the marked success with which women police have been employed in various parts of the country.”

However, no matter what opinions may be expressed by Commissions and Committees, women will no doubt win through on their merits. Opportunities will inevitably come to them and, if they can produce results, I feel that they will take some stopping.

CHAPTER X

UNOFFICIAL RECORDS

A PLEASANT feature of my nineteen years at Scotland Yard was that the staff came to realize that I had a weakness for the ridiculous and that I was seldom so preoccupied that I could not find time to laugh.

It became therefore the habit of some to put "Secretary to see" on any report or letter which they thought likely to give me pleasure, and it was my habit to record in a book such of the offerings as appeared to be worthy of preservation.

In this respect the Gods were kind to us. Police work touches human life at many and various points and things said or written both by members of the public and by police officers themselves sometimes have an "entertainment value" which is quite unintentional. Queer people write queer letters and some of the grimmest topics are liable to reveal slightly humorous aspects.

Thus, with the passage of years, from one source and another, my record gradually swelled to quite a sizable volume and some of the entries may be of interest.

During the 1940-1 air raids a "Situation Report as at 0600 hours" said: "Bombing was general throughout the London Region last night. No damage of military importance was suffered. The War Office at Whitehall received a direct hit by an H.E. bomb."

It is the practice to report the movements of the King and Queen by telegram. One such message read:

"Superintendent — to H.Q. His Majesty the King entered this Division at 1.45 p.m. and passed out at 2.15 p.m."

One evening a constable observed a young lady about to park her car in a London street. He approached her and said: "Hi, miss, you can't park your car here."



Young Lady Motorist (in conflict with the law): "If it wasn't so absurdly impossible, I'd say you were too kind for your own good."

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"Oh, but constable, this is a cul-de-sac."

"Can't help it, miss. If it's a Rolls Royce you can't leave it here."

It is recorded that late one night in Trafalgar Square an old gentleman, slightly the worse for drink, was observed apparently searching for something on the pavement. A constable approached and said: "What's the matter, sir? Have you lost something?"

"Yes," said the old gentleman feebly, "I've lost my purse."

It seemed rather an odd place to lose a purse and the constable said: "Are you sure you lost it hereabouts?"

"Oh no," replied the old gent, "I lost it in Dover Street, but Trafalgar Square is so much better lighted."

A constable was carrying out one of his periodical inspections of the cells of a Station when his attention was attracted by the appearance of the occupant of No. 4. He went into the cell to investigate and found that the occupant was dead.

With a very long face he went to the inspector's office and said: "Inspector, No. 4 is dead."

The inspector took off his cap and scratched his head with his pencil. Thoughts of all the inquiries and reports which follow when a prisoner dies in a cell came to his mind. He looked at the P.C. and said: "Young man, nobody but you and me knows that No. 4's dead. You'd better go out for a nice long walk."

About an hour afterwards, another constable, who was working the beat adjoining the Station, came in and reported that a man had been found sitting against the wall about 200 yards away, apparently dead, with a Bailed Out Form in his hand.

The written examination for candidates for the Metropolitan Police included a General Knowledge paper. A question in one such paper was, "State briefly what you know of the Battle of Trafalgar." One answer sent in was, "The Battle of Trafalgar was fought in 1066, on and around the ground which is now called Trafalgar Square. It was a victory for the English against Oliver Cromwell and his men."

Complaints of police actions or behaviour are more likely to be troublesome than amusing, but there is occasionally a lighter side.

One citizen, for example, complaining that he had been excluded from a police court by the constable at the door, said:

"The policeman has been most rude in his manner. When I walked into the public entrance on two occasions, he extended his abdomen, colliding the same with mine."

Another rather curious complaint was received during one of the early air raids at the time when the ack-ack guns and bombs between them made, as every Londoner will remember, a fairly shattering din. An American who had never been in London or in an air raid before, arrived by train at Charing Cross. Emerging from the station into this racket, he went up to a policeman and said: "Is this an air raid?" To which the P.C. replied: "Oh no, sir. Only the Home Guard having an exercise." The complainant—not the American but someone writing on his behalf—suggested that it was very wrong for a constable to be frivolous in such a serious situation. Officially one could hardly disagree, and the only excuse that could be offered for the constable's misplaced levity was that he probably thought he was having his leg pulled.

The desirability of courtesy at all times in dealing with the public was rather nicely and simply put by a man who had cause to protest at something a constable had said to him.

"I think an officer has the right to be civil in his ways as well as he would like the individual to be civil to him."

It has to be admitted that the police are not always universally popular. Some time ago it was reported that a gentleman was leaving a police station after transacting some business, when he noticed that the "Reserve" constable at the door had a list in his hand.

He asked the constable what the list was and the constable replied that he was collecting money for a wreath for a brother officer who had died.

The gentleman said that he would like to subscribe but the constable objected on the ground that the subscription was open only to police officers.

Eventually, however, as the gentleman seemed very anxious to subscribe, the constable gave way and the gentleman handed him ten shillings. The constable then said: "Oh, but that is far too much,

sir. I must give you nine shillings change. The subscription is only one shilling."

"Oh, no," said the gentleman, "keep it, and bury some more of the blighters."

Pleasing touches appear from time to time in police reports. The following extracts give a few examples:

"The quarters in question have recently been occupied by another inspector whose family is such as to make the provision of a bath a matter of urgent importance."

On the case of a woman who had attempted to commit suicide a P.C. said: "There is no record of a previous attempt and there is no evidence of insanity except her fondness for men."

A permit given by the — Police to an alien (whose movements were restricted during the war) to travel from town A. to town B. to visit Lady —:

"Mr. — is authorized to travel outside the five mile limit to B. town for the purpose of taking tea with the Viscountess — at his own risk."

A provincial report contained the following description of a somewhat unusual visitor:

"On 12th December Miss N. P. came to this station, complaining of the people with whom she was lodging. They had, without her sanction, cleaned her room and she wanted them arrested for it.

"It was difficult to talk to this woman as she had a bad smell about her and she would insist on talking for twenty or thirty minutes in order to say that which she might have said in two minutes. . . . She had a pet goat and this probably caused the strong smell."

Perhaps one ought not to find any excuse for a smile in the following extract from a report on a fire:

"P.C. Smith then organized a human chain for the purpose of passing water in buckets."

Who shall say whether P.C. Jones had his tongue in his cheek or not when he reported thus:

"... At 6.50 p.m. two gentlemen in plain clothes approached me,

one of whom informed me that he was Mr. —, Assistant Commissioner, and said: 'What are you fiddling with those lights for, you damn fool? The traffic is lined up as far as Vauxhall Bridge, it is a disgusting state of affairs. Switch those lights to automatic.' And to the gentleman with him he said: 'Take his number.'

"... I was given no opportunity to ask for proof of identity, but owing to the well-spoken manner and demeanour of the gentleman. I am of the opinion that he and the person with him were police officers."

Dealing with a question about the occupation of certain married quarters a sub-divisional inspector wrote:

"Submitted. This report has been held back for two days as there was some difficulty owing to the inspector having no wife nor family. This has now been overcome and he will occupy the quarters in the ordinary way."

Though less emphasis is placed these days than in past times on size and brawn in police recruits, some of the tasks with which constables may be faced still seem to call for men of ample proportions. An officer reporting on a case in which three horses had been stolen by a gang of men, said that information had been received that the men were at a certain place. On arrival at the place, the constable found the three men mounted on the three horses. "As there was no help available," he said, "I therefore surrounded the men and conveyed them to the Station."

A nice incident reached us from the dental clinic.

A large, full-blooded constable was seated in the dentist's chair. The extraction was complete and he was just regaining consciousness from the gas. Suddenly he burst into a volley of abuse. The dentist was interested at hearing words which were unfamiliar to him, but was slightly alarmed. He tapped the constable on the shoulder and said: "Open your eyes, man, and see where you are."

The constable slowly opened his eyes, looked at the dentist and said: "I'm sorry, doctor, I thought I was talking to my wife."

Letters from members of the public included from time to time somewhat strange requests. A woman writing from South London asked "if there is any reward as I was the first to find my cousin Louisa — dead in bed on May 9th."

I have no record of what sort of reply was sent to a letter from Newcastle signed "Yours Jean and Nell" which read:

"DEAR SIRS,

"We are two young women who are coming to London to Service and would like two nice young men, who would keep our company as we would feel rather lonely in a strange place. We are rather tall girls one rather fair and the other dark and well built, our ages are twenty-four and twenty-six. We are willing to exchange Photo's. An early reply would be acceptable. Will send further particulars in reply."

Then there was a request from British Columbia:

"You will do me a great favor, if you will send me Instructions how to arrest a man without beating his Brains out. If you have any Printed instructions or Books of instructions kindly let me know the price of them."

A person signing herself curiously as "A woman and two other women" started her letter, "Dear Sir, I am writing because my husband says he is going to kill me if I do."

A little unusual too was one which arrived not so long ago addressed to me personally:

"DEAR SIR,

"News at last Sir:—My husband has passed away; thank you very much; I trust you will see me through please into another life; I shall be so thankfull for a change, please.

"Yours,

"Mrs. G. —."

Applications for employment were also liable to show originality.

One applicant said simply: "I cannot claim any particular fancy education. I just *feel* I am capable."

Another who had asked for particulars with the idea of becoming a candidate for the Force lost his courage when faced with the application form. He returned it with a covering letter:

"SIRS,

"I shall be of no use because I have a stoppiage in my speack and I have bunions on my feet as it will be of no use me trying because I should be of no use yours truely."

A more hopeful applicant, thinking, as people often do—incorrectly—that Scotland Yard needs the services of interpreters, wrote:

"SIR,

"I beg to apply for a situation in the Police Department as an interpreter, as I can speak the Alien language influently; and I can assure you Sir; that you would find me to be the right hand man for your Department. . . ."

The following extract is taken from a letter, presumably relating to street betting:

"DEAR SIR,

"My wife, Mary Smith, is living a postrate life with a man who is a runner and of a foreign nationality of whom she has an illegible child."

The typists at Scotland Yard are not necessarily also linguists. They copy addresses usually from the letter to which they are replying. A letter was noticed leaving Scotland Yard addressed as follows:

J. A. Brown, Esq.,
Hotel de Londres,
Eau courant dans toutes les chambres,
Paris.

From a Police Court (now Magistrate's Court) the following question and answer reached us:

"Magistrate: What is this woman?

"Constable: A prostitute pure and simple, your Worship."

Not funny in any way but rather charming in its simplicity was the following passage in a statement by a woman who had been rescued from a bomb-damaged house by a police officer:

"He eventually got me out and had me put in an ambulance. The

policeman carried me down the stairs. The policeman was very gentle with me and I am sure that if he hadn't come to me so soon I should have died."

My book also contains a few anecdotes of verbal exchanges between police officers and members of the public.

A constable on duty late one evening on a quiet road on the outskirts of the Metropolitan Police District saw coming towards him a car of the "sports coupé" type which was being driven in a somewhat erratic manner, and he decided that a word of official advice to the driver would be not inappropriate. He therefore stepped into the road and signalled to the driver to stop. As the car drew in to the side of the road the officer observed that the driver was a highly decorative young platinum-blond. Hoping to create a proper atmosphere for the solemn words of warning he proposed to deliver, he stood for a moment with an expression of dignified contemplation and then approached the car in a ponderous and majestic manner.

"I suppose you are aware of the reason for my stopping you?" he began.

"O'course I am darling," was the immediate reply. "Feeling all lonely out here by yourself aren't you? Anything I can do?"

Whether the constable decided to take the count at this stage or made any attempt to restore the situation is not recorded.

It isn't by any means always that the officer gets the worst of the verbal exchanges of the highway, and though "answering back" is officially discouraged, instances come to notice from time to time.

One such occurred a few years ago when a constable had occasion to "take particulars" from a specially haughty, befurred and bejewelled young lady driver who had infringed some section of one of the Traffic Acts.

The lady regarded the whole proceedings as an offence to her dignity and an unwarrantable intrusion upon her private affairs, and met every inquiry with one of the sarcasms to which traffic policemen are immune through long habit. "I wonder you can't find something better to do," or "I suppose you are hoping to get promotion out of this," and so forth.

Getting no response in this way she tried a final shot on somewhat more original lines. (This was at the time when the Police College was much in the news.)

"I suppose you're one of Lord Trenchard's young gentlemen, aren't you?"

"Maybe I am. And are you perhaps one of Mr. Cochran's young ladies?"

He took a big risk of being reported for insolence, but it was probably worth it.

Talking of young ladies and complaints, I remember a curious instance of misplaced gallantry being treated as impertinence.

A constable on point duty who happened to be rather an elegant young man, signalled a stream of traffic to stop at a cross-road where there was a refuge and one of those white lines which indicate the stopping place. The object is of course to leave the pedestrians room to cross the road via the refuge. A lady driver overshot the mark by several yards before pulling up right across the normal stream of pedestrians.

The constable walked patiently up to the car and stooping down to the driver's window said:

"Madam, if you would cast those delightful eyes of yours five yards to the rear, you would observe a white line which is put there for a very definite purpose."

She complained and the constable was duly rebuked. Shortly afterwards he left the Force. The lady's ungraciousness was apparently the last straw.

When M. Chiappe was Préfet of Police in Paris he paid a visit to Scotland Yard and was suitably entertained. (In view of subsequent developments I hope we didn't lay bare to him any vital secrets.)

He was a vivacious little man about five feet two inches in height and very amusing. A Corsican if I remember right. His chatter, which was like bursts of machine-gun fire, was mainly in French and when he broke into English, as he did from time to time for no apparent reason, he became quite unintelligible.

During his visit to Scotland Yard he came into my room. I offered him a chair, but sitting still was not his *métier* and he trotted round the room examining everything. The view over the Thames particularly appealed to him: "*Que c'est joli. Que c'est magnifique!*" Then the pictures and photographs had to be admired and prattled about. Lastly he saw my golf clubs hanging on a peg. "Ah," he exclaimed. "You play ze 'ockey. Yes?"

I was just about to acknowledge myself as a devotee of ze 'ockey, when his staff officer—much distressed at the Préfet's ignorance of the

"affaires sportives"—butted in with "Mais, Monsieur, c'est le golf, c'est le golf." Needless to say the little man was quite unabashed.

For the following story I cannot vouch. It reached me from an outside source and has a somewhat synthetic ring.

A constable on his beat during the black-out observed a thin strip of light showing through an imperfectly drawn curtain in an upper room. He knocked at the front door, which was opened after a time by a somewhat tousled female figure in a dressing-gown. "Sorry to get you down, miss, but you've got a chink up there." "I have no such thing. He's a Brazilian and a very nice gentleman."

One more last anecdote I feel I must include, though I do so with diffidence as I have discovered that it has already been told, with adjustments to fit the particular locality, in several other Police Forces beside the Metropolitan. With apologies therefore to police officers who may have heard it before in some form or other, I include it as I feel that it deserves a wider circulation.

This is the Metropolitan version:

A horse fell dead in Ahasuerus Street, Whitechapel, and the constable who had been called to the incident was engaged in writing his report on it at the station. In the same room with him was a sergeant.

"Sergeant," said the P.C. looking up from his task. "How do you spell Ahasuerus?"

"You just get on with your work, young man, and let me get on with mine."

Long pause. Then pleadingly: "Sergeant, you might tell me how to spell Ahasuerus."

"Look you here, young man. Who's writing this report, you or me? I've got enough to do without answering ignorant questions."

Another pause. Then the P.C. was seen to put on his helmet and move towards the door.

"Where are you going?" asked the sergeant.

"I'm going to have that bloody horse moved into the High Street."

CHAPTER XI

PRESS

AN item allotted to the Secretary in the scheme of work at Scotland Yard was "Press", but late in 1945 Sir Harold Scott, shortly after his appointment as Commissioner, added a post of "Public Information Officer" to the cadre. This afforded a welcome relief to the Secretary as the new officer took over the bulk of the work connected not only with the Press but also with the cinema and the B.B.C. Also it ensured that this branch of work was much more thoroughly dealt with.

Up to that time the only regular machinery for maintaining day-to-day contacts with the newspaper world was the Press Bureau—a small office in the basement to which reporters had access and from which items of news of the kind they wanted were handed out.

It is perhaps curious that a service which depends for its success probably more than any other public service on the understanding and support of the people should have been content to carry on for so many years with no proper provision in its organization for maintaining contact with the world and ensuring that people understood in some measure what their police were trying to do for them and why.

It is the more surprising that this should have been the position until 1945, as the records at Scotland Yard show that as early as 1835—only six years after the Metropolitan Police Force came into existence—the Commissioners discovered the value of Press contacts. We read of their establishing friendly relations with the editors of responsible newspapers and supplying them with facts relating to the "many false accusations which were being made at that time against the police."

Some, if not all, of the crises which have occurred in the past, when public indignation against the police has become really serious, arose not so much from the wickedness or incorrectness of police action as

from the exaggerated impression allowed to develop in the public mind of the extent and importance of the incident or incidents which started the trouble.

The Metropolitan Police have suffered from time to time in the past from what is sometimes called a "bad Press". Fleet Street had got the impression, not of course without some grounds for it, that things were not quite as they should be either at Scotland Yard or in the Force itself. If nothing was done to correct such an impression, if when heat began to be generated in the stack no attempt was made to locate and release it, the stage of spontaneous combustion would be reached and the whole jolly stack would go up in flames amidst general cheers.

When in a Police Force two or three cases of corruption come to light, numbers of people begin to dig up stories they've heard, how all the prostitutes pay the police to leave them in peace, how pubs and clubs break the law with impunity, how street bookmakers ply their trade without interference and "everybody knows how that is done", etc. etc.

When a magistrate dismisses a charge with costs against the police or some unfortunate gets himself arrested on mistaken identity, the case becomes front-page news. Few bother to suspend judgment till they have heard the other side. An unsympathetic Press does not trouble to point out that the mistake was quite honestly made on what looked like conclusive evidence, that a Force which never makes a mistake never makes anything, or that in tens of thousands of arrests, the dropping of an occasional brick is unavoidable.

When those whose business it is to secure good behaviour and to correct erroneous conduct, themselves behave badly or make mistakes, the story is greeted with delight by the self-righteous. The erring policeman has news value second only to the promiscuous parson. The fire once started is kept bright by the eager contributions of people who scour the countryside for bits of rotten wood to add to it.

The Money-Savidge case referred to in an earlier chapter was a good example. There were two salient points. The first was that the magistrate in dismissing the case implied disbelief in the policeman's evidence. The second was that Scotland Yard was suspected of having applied third degree in obtaining a statement from Miss Savidge. The Metropolitan Police had a definitely "bad Press" at that time. Fleet Street was in the mood to believe the worst and

the case against the police on both points seemed to the public, whose only means of judging it was what they read in the newspapers, to be pretty black.

It wasn't until long after the event, when most people had lost interest, that, in result of various high-power investigations, and debates in both Houses of Parliament, the affair began at last to assume its true proportions.

Lord Birkenhead, with his usual force and clarity, put the matter in its proper light when he said in the House of Lords:

"If an elderly man takes a girl thirty years younger than himself to lunch in a restaurant in Soho, a girl not belonging to the same class of life, not sharing, as one may surmise, his intellectual and economic interests and sits in close proximity to her in Hyde Park, if there takes place between them some caress . . . have they very great grounds for complaint if a policeman forty or fifty yards away misinterprets the precise nature of the caress? . . . There is no park in Europe in which so much indecorum can be nightly observed as Hyde Park. . . . I do not see any justification for the state of hysterical indignation which has been shown because two people most indiscreetly have placed themselves in a most equivocal position which was misunderstood by witnesses who, I will ask Your Lordships to say, were entirely honest."

This was precisely what many people (or those of them who still bothered to give any thought to the matter) were thinking and saying by that time—many months after the event. In fact, in clubs and places where men of the world speak freely without the risk of seeing what they have said in to-morrow's paper, more definite conclusions even than those offered by Lord Birkenhead were current.

Similarly with the other part of the business—the third degree suggestion. By the time it had been thrashed out for days by a parliamentary tribunal of inquiry and people had seen for themselves that the brutal C.I.D. officer was in fact an exceptionally gentle-faced, middle-aged, white-haired person who looked more like a country vicar than a policeman, by the time the full facts of the matter had been exposed and examined, it was realized that first impressions had been grossly erroneous and that there really was nothing to bother about. Smoke without fire in fact.

My object in dragging out this somewhat sordid old story is to

illustrate the thesis that if the relationship between Scotland Yard and Fleet Street is chilly, if there is no one at the Yard who can ring up editors or proprietors and say: "Hi, hold your horses a moment. Things are not quite what they seem. These are the facts," then there is always a danger that the public may get led up the garden path a bit and much harm may be done.

The Money-Savidge case is now ancient history, and there has been nothing approaching it in intensity of misunderstanding since. This may be because no comparable incidents have occurred or because various steps have been taken during the last fifteen years to establish closer contacts with Fleet Street and, long before the Public Information Officer was appointed, relations had become more cordial. There has been no longer any difficulty in ensuring that Fleet Street should be fully informed on any matters of importance in police affairs. Lord Trenchard took trouble to explain what he was up to and why to the papers before he made any important step forward. The mere fact of the Commissioner of Police taking editors into his confidence is calculated in itself to create a sympathetic attitude from the start.

The object of contacts with the Press is not in the least to avoid criticism. That has been emphasized several times by more than one Commissioner. When Lord Trenchard was producing his reforms, a number of slashing attacks on them appeared in an important London paper. It was quite natural and to be expected that a paper representing the Labour point of view should object to plans which had what might be regarded as an anti-democratic trend. The general line of attack was similar to that followed by Labour members in the House of Commons. But it did not enter Lord Trenchard's head to raise any objection, until some articles appeared which were based on inaccurate information and appeared likely to have an unsettling effect on the Force. When that happened he told me to take the matter up with the paper. This I did and, after some friendly talks in which I explained in detail what Lord Trenchard was trying to do and why, the whole attitude of the paper changed and, when Lord Trenchard retired, this same newspaper contained one of the most cordial tributes to his achievements.

Newspaper friends have asked me from time to time why, when a sensational murder is under investigation, Scotland Yard cannot adopt the procedure followed by Ministers in their dealings with parliamentary reporters, of telling them more or less the whole story, with stipulations as to what can and what cannot be reported. This,

they say, works very well. Breaches of confidence are extremely rare and when they occur the offending reporter is suitably dealt with by his colleagues, who are naturally anxious not to jeopardize what is to them a most valuable practice.

In order to test the reactions of senior police officers to this idea, I asked a responsible Managing Editor who had discussed it with me to address one of the periodical courses which used to be held in London before the war for Chief Constables and other high-ranking policemen from all over the country. He put the case very clearly, but the reception was on the whole adverse.

In the field of crime investigation there is an inescapable conflict of interest between police and Press. The sole business of the police is to trace the criminal and bring him to justice. They are not concerned with the popular taste for sensational stories. In fact, public interest is in most cases a hindrance rather than a help. The Press man's business on the other hand is to secure stories—the juicier the better. Competition amongst papers and amongst reporters is keen. In the case of a sensational murder the reporter's very existence depends on his success in presenting the public with a steady supply of information on every aspect of the case. He must watch the movements of the investigating officers, he may sometimes interview relations and friends of the victim, and he is frequently tempted to indulge in a certain amount of investigation on his own account. This inevitably embarrasses the officers engaged on the case, who have to expend much of their energies and ingenuity in eluding the attentions of the reporters when they should be concentrating solely on their problem. Another, and more important, point is that a certain degree of secrecy is necessary in many instances as it may be highly undesirable that a criminal who is trying to evade capture should be informed what line of inquiry the police are pursuing, what places they have visited and who they have interviewed.

It might appear at first sight that the plan suggested under which reporters would be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigations by a responsible officer, with stipulations as to the items which should and should not be published, would, if both sides played the game fairly, get over most of the difficulties.

But many senior police officers were clearly distrustful of the idea. They did not think it would work. The circumstances in the Houses of Parliament and in Government Departments were entirely different from those surrounding a murder. In the former spheres there might

be no difficulty in controlling the activities of a compact body of responsible reporters all personally known and attending regularly. In crime investigations there could be no such continuity or control. Location and circumstances vary and the reporters and officers engaged are not the same in every case.

The result was that after an interesting and animated discussion the idea got no further at that time. It may be that, so far at any rate as London is concerned, the Public Information Officer and the Press may find it possible to work out some better plan in the future.

I have dealt at some length with the question of Press and police problems in connection with crime investigation, not because this aspect of the matter is of any special importance to the public, but because it is a source of minor friction, and crime reporters are liable to feel strongly about it. It has been said that crime ranks second only to war in news value and it follows that from the reporters' point of view the police's most important function is to provide them with good stories. Their bread and butter depends on it and the possibility that their activities may sometimes impede the course of justice is naturally liable to take second place in their minds. However, in this as in most other spheres where conflict of interest arises, if the individuals involved are reasonable men seeing one another's difficulties and adopting a live-and-let-live attitude, both sides will achieve what they are after without doing one another, or the public, a great deal of damage.

In a big way the far more important aspects of police-Press relations are those referred to earlier. The harm that can be done by the weakening of public confidence in the honesty and efficiency of those entrusted by the community with the enforcement of the laws it makes for itself, is very great. Here there is no conflict of interest and cordial co-operation can be easily achieved if the right machinery exists and is sensibly directed.

The policy adopted by the officers in charge of the police forces of this country as regards giving information to the Press is not standardized and varies a good deal.

There are those who adopt an almost entirely non-co-operative attitude, those who go out of their way to give as much information as possible and those who steer a middle course.

The principle followed at Scotland Yard has been for many years to recognize that the job of the Press is to supply the public with the news they want. The police are the servants of the public and if

information about them and the work they do happens to be the kind of news the public wants, the police are justified in assisting the Press, within reason, in obtaining such information. It has therefore been the practice to endeavour to meet the legitimate demands of the Press for news so far as this can be done without divulging secret or confidential information or information the publication of which might assist offenders or be in any way contrary to the interests of justice or might cause unnecessary pain or distress or involve the private concerns of individuals.

Whether it does the public any good to have given them as news a lot of the slush which forms a large part of the daily or weekly offering of a few papers is nothing to do with the police. That is a matter between the public and the papers in question. So long as net sales indicate a keen public demand for slush, so long will there be papers ready to meet the demand.

Russia, I am told, prohibits crime news altogether, but until we attain to Communistic standards of liberty, we shall probably prefer to let people go on reading what they want to read, even though we may suspect that they could be better employed.

Whether or not the furnishing of news to the Press is in the nature of an obligation on the police is no doubt an arguable point, but if a more or less non-co-operative attitude is adopted, the Press can hardly be blamed when they publish false or inaccurate statements. Also, of course, the absence of any official supply of news stimulates recourse to illicit sources. "Leakages" are a constant difficulty and are not easy to trace. The best antidote is to remove the stimulus as far as possible by giving officially as much information as can reasonably be asked for.

Whatever line is taken on this question, inaccuracies will inevitably appear from time to time. One knows the sort of pressure under which newspapers work. It may be too much to expect them to check every item before publication. But allowing for these difficulties, it is a little surprising how some things find their way into print.

In addition to what one might call the ordinary, largely unavoidable, inaccuracies which find their way from time to time even into reputable papers, one encounters occasionally, in the less reputable papers, the most astonishing flights of imagination—fiction of the wildest kind dressed as fact.

How they come about I have never been able to understand.

Does some free-lance journalist, confined to bed with a dose of 'flu and unable to go news-hunting, find himself reduced to making up stories on the chance that they will pass muster as fact and enable him to pay his doctor's bill?

There was one, I remember, that made us laugh quite a bit. Just after Lord Byng had taken up his appointment as Commissioner, one of the very much less reputable periodicals published a story by a contributor who had apparently, by some means unexplained, gained access to the Commissioner's room and proceeded to describe what he saw there. He depicted Lord Byng as surrounded by every conceivable kind of mechanical device. By means of coloured lights on large-scale maps he kept his finger on the pulse of crime in every one of the 700 square miles of the Metropolitan Police District. Bells tinkled and buzzers buzzed at intervals. By telephone—private lines and wireless—by teleprinter and by telegram, he was kept in touch with every move in the latest murder investigation, and personally directed each step.

In fact—as may be remembered from an earlier chapter—Lord Byng had such an antipathy for mechanical contraptions that he was barely persuaded to allow one ordinary telephone to remain in his room, and if he wanted to speak to anyone he was quite likely to wander along the passage, rather than ring a bell or send a message. As to crime, he watched the general situation of course, as all police chiefs must do, but the direction of individual investigations he left entirely to those whose business it is to carry them out.

There was another story published by a man who was bold enough to sign it, describing a nocturnal visit to the Yard. "This secluded fortress," he said, "had no need for bolts and bars to guard its secrets. Unseen eyes note the advent of every visitor through hidden look-outs." As he placed his hand on the polished steel banister rail, bells rang on the floors above and below him. Thus his exact position in the building was always known. On the roof, where a "veritable forest of wires stretched away in every direction," he tried the experiment of cutting one with a wire-cutter. "I gripped the wire-cutter firmly, enclosing a single strand between the steel jaws. The next moment I was helpless, paralysed by the sudden shock of electricity; neither was I able to relinquish my grip on the wire-cutter until the current was switched off."

There were two or three columns of this sort of thing, presumably intended for the young, and perhaps, after all, no more

harmful than Santa Claus and other intriguing fiction commonly employed.

More difficult and dangerous were the literary efforts of a retired Metropolitan police officer who had been in the C.I.D. and in the Special Branch for a short time. His accounts of the thrilling episodes of his police career were very well written but entirely fictitious. He knew enough of the workings of the machine to produce stories which might easily, and did actually, deceive a number of discriminating editors. He specialized in adventures connected with the protection of distinguished people and claimed familiarity with most of the Royal Family. He even got so far as to write a book but I never heard that he secured a publisher. Gradually the newspaper and publishing world became wise—with our assistance—to his real character and the nuisance came to an end.

But purely fictitious items were rare and unimportant. The appearance, sometimes in papers with large circulations, of inaccurate or incorrect statements, was not uncommon and people would frequently bring me some paper and point indignantly at something that had been wrongly reported. The question then was what should we do about it. The line I always took was "What harm?" A mere inaccuracy, however gross, is of no consequence to anybody except the paper (and of course the poor defenceless readers) and unless it could be shown that damage was done to the police themselves or to the course of justice, or in some other important way, there did not appear to be any occasion for action.

Editors almost always responded cordially enough if one could convince them that an inaccurate or untrue statement had done definite damage. Papers don't like "eating their words" and one seldom asked them to do so, but it was often possible for them to insert a fresh item which, without definitely contradicting the previous utterance, would act as a counterblast and repair at least some of the harm done.

As a rule editors were also most helpful if they had in their hands a piece of news which should, we felt, be suppressed "pro bono publico" for a while. The Press Association were also very willing to help on such occasions. If, for example, some new and easy way of entering houses were mentioned during the hearing of a case in court, a reporter might quite naturally include a description of the method in his report. It would be an interesting little item of news to many readers, but its publication would inevitably advertise the

device amongst young criminals, with perhaps unfortunate results. Again, when C.I.D. officers have taken great pains to secure the arrest of an elusive forger or coiner, it is a bit annoying for them, as well as being contrary to the interests of justice, if some reporter gets wind of it and lets the cat out of the bag. On such occasions the Press Association were always ready to pass the word that we would be glad if papers would kindly keep quiet for a time, and editors invariably responded if they regarded the request as reasonable.

I recall an example which occurred some few years ago of the good effect that an understanding attitude by the Press may have on a rather unfortunate episode. A well-known society announced its intention of holding a meeting at which a highly controversial subject was to be discussed. Blood pressures had risen dangerously on a previous similar occasion and as there was a prospect of opposing factions coming to blows this time, police protection was asked for. A suggestion that they might be wise to abandon their project was not well received as they apparently regarded themselves as morally bound to go through with it at any cost. There is no power to prohibit such an assembly on private premises and a small party of police under an inspector was therefore detailed to stand by with directions to intervene if the peace were actually breached. It may be that the inspector did not feel over-sympathetic with folk who butted their heads into trouble—as it seemed quite unnecessarily—and then expected other people to get them out of it. Anyway, either by design or inadvertence, he let the meeting boil over and held back his men until the anticipated free-for-all scrap had continued for quite a while. By the time he intervened a number of worthy members had had their heads cracked with chairs and other extemporary weapons, and there was a pretty bad mess.

The result was that in a very short time an indignant deputation of bandaged and limping gentlemen appeared at Scotland Yard demanding to see the Commissioner to lay their grievances before him. It did not take long to establish the fact that the inspector had indeed been too slow in taking action. This was at once admitted, full apology was offered and a letter of regret was written.

The incident was fully reported in most London newspapers. Though it was open to them to paint a sad picture of police incompetence under some such headlines as "Gross police blunder. Neglect of duty by Inspector", actually, almost without exception, they wrote

up the episode as a fine example of a public authority frankly admitting an error of judgment and immediately offering such redress as was possible. In fact, so laudatory was the general tone, that the Force acquired merit instead of the censure which the admitted error might have evoked.

CHAPTER XII

LOOKING FORWARD

It has been said that prophecy is the most futile form of error. Those who have, or profess to have, the capacity of seeing ahead seem to confine themselves generally to the personal fortunes or misfortunes of individuals. When they do stray into wider fields their forecasts are as a rule so beautifully indefinite that almost any events may be fitted into them with a little imagination and goodwill.

I make no psychic claims and the "looking forward" suggested in the title of this chapter is not therefore an anticipation of what will happen, but a few random thoughts on developments which seem to lie ahead.

One of the most important jobs of work carried out at Scotland Yard at any time is recruiting. At the present moment it is not only important but urgent. Normal wastage in the Metropolitan Force is nearly 1,000 men a year. During the war this wastage was both accelerated and retarded—accelerated by casualties in the Armed Forces and also the Home Front, and retarded by the suspension of retirement. The retirement ban is now lifted and the Force has reached numerically a very low ebb.

Those responsible for the recruiting of a Police Force are always up against the perennial problem of brawn versus brain. In every acceptable candidate there must obviously be a proportion of both. The brainless cannot master all the acts and regulations with which the modern policeman must be familiar, nor can they write intelligible reports. The brawnless cannot subdue the disorderly, apprehend the combatant criminal or restrain a turbulent crowd. The question is how to achieve the right balance.

The Force which takes too high a proportion of brainy and ambitious men is liable to become a discontented Force. At the best of times there cannot be enough higher posts to satisfy the legitimate demands of those seeking—and deserving—promotion. Whatever

the system of promotion, many who have the capacity for control must be disappointed. If the number of such men is over-high, the sum total of discontent resulting may become a source of weakness.

In the police, no more and no less than in any other calling or profession, there are always, thank goodness, a number of "pedestrians"—men who are content to stay put in the lower ranks. Many of them are fine policemen. It may be that they lack ambition or it may be that the acceptance of responsibility does not appeal to them. Or, again, they may be bad at examinations or have other interests which prevent them from applying themselves at the right time to the somewhat tedious drudgery of mugging up regulations and orders to "pass for sergeant".

Not long ago I came across an unusual example. He was a P.C. employed as a car-driver. At the start of a journey which took about an hour and a half I noticed a book of a fairly "stiff" type lying on the seat beside him. That started it and we talked without pause the whole way. The war, politics, Spain, Russia, police work, etc. etc. On every subject touched he had not only read but thought. We spent quite a time on Russia, a subject in which I have myself taken a lot of interest as a result perhaps of being in Siberia for a year in 1918-19. He had read every book I could remember, Hindus, Baring, Mrs. Chesterton, Krivitsky, etc. etc. The opinions he had thus formed were not of the synthetic type one so often meets—slogans revolving in a vacuum—but sound common-sense judgments based on the facts he had stored in his mind. He had also read and greatly enjoyed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* of Homer.

"How comes it," I asked him, "that you, with over twenty years' service, have been content to remain a constable?"

"Well, sir," he answered. "When I was a young man I was fond of games and had a lot of interests. I married young, too, and, one way and another, I didn't get down to the business of passing for sergeant. It wasn't until later that I took to reading seriously. They talk about equality of opportunity. Well, I had my chance, same as most people, and I didn't take it. I've nothing to grumble about. Then again education. It doesn't really do you a lot of good, I believe, when it's forced on you. It's when you find you want it and go out to get it, that you find the benefit. And there it is, waiting for you all the time. Fourpence a year. That's all I pay for mine. My subscription to the public library."

He was most enthusiastic about public libraries. They would always, he said, take trouble to get a book for him if they hadn't got it.

The difficulty with the "pedestrians", those who don't go for promotion, is to keep them keen when there is no longer any real incentive to keenness except a sense of duty. The sense of duty is effective with a lot of them, but not all. Lord Trenchard tried to cope with this problem (as related in the chapter on his period) by the short service system. That has gone and no alternative has been put in its place.

Unfortunately the efficiency or otherwise of an individual officer on "uniform duty" cannot be statistically assessed. The C.I.D. man working in plain clothes is different. His job first and foremost is that of a thief-catcher. If he catches no thieves he has failed. Not so the officer in uniform. If you were rash enough to say to him: "You haven't brought a charge or reported anyone for a summons for three months. What's the matter with you?" he might well refer you to the police principle which says that "the true test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the number of prosecutions". Unless therefore you are able to demonstrate that there has in fact been crime and disorder on his "ground" of a kind which he should have been able to prevent or detect, you can't get much further with him. You may know perfectly well that he is a lazy devil and that a keen man, without being over-officious, would have been compelled to bring in a few "cases" in that space of time, but it is very dangerous to call him to account on such grounds. You lay yourself open at once to the charge of stimulating the persecution of the public and wasting the time of the courts with needless cases. A Branch Board protest is likely to be evoked by any attempt by a senior officer to assess a constable's efficiency on the basis of charges and summonses. Not that Branch Boards are sympathetic with slackness. They aren't. But, if I rightly understand their attitude, they see danger in this way of measuring police efficiency and resist it even if they may suspect the individual officer of being a somewhat lethargic specimen. They may be right. There is a danger. One has heard of officers who, suspecting that their records didn't look too good, restored the position from time to time by taking a few quite unnecessary obstruction cases.

The difficulty of convicting the slacker of slackness makes it all the more important to find some way of inciting him to keenness.

The personal influence and example of the right kind of local supervisory officers can, and does, achieve a great deal. But human nature being what it is, a carrot of some kind is badly needed. Theoretically the long-service increments, awarded after fifteen and twenty-two years' service to men who have satisfied the Chief Officer of Police that they have shown zeal and proficiency in the performance of their duties and are well conducted, are carrots. But in many Forces they are awarded almost automatically, because in the course of years the position has become that unworthiness must be proved to justify withholding the increments rather than worthiness being proved to justify their award. The difficulty of proving unworthiness has already been explained and the result is that the value of the increments as carrots has disappeared.

Much thought has been given to this problem already by those whose business it is to solve it, but so far without any satisfactory results. There is probably no completely effective solution. Incentives, however cleverly devised, will not produce results in all cases. There will always be those who are allergic to carrots.

But would it not go some way to remedy this very important defect in the system if a limited number of awards were offered for specially good constables who have reached their maximum rates? The number would have to be limited so as to prevent the new award also becoming more or less automatic. In the Metropolitan Police the scheme might be worked on a Divisional basis. If in one Division there were 100 men with the required service, about fifty awards might be given, to be held for, say, three years and then to come up for review. The difficulty would be to find some way of picking the men—a way which would not only be fair, but obviously fair. It wouldn't do for all the awards to go to toadies and yes-men or for anybody to have grounds for thinking so.

The men themselves would probably want some sort of written test, for the sole reason that it is completely proof against favouritism, but the man who knows most is not necessarily the man who does most and a written test alone would be bad for that reason. It would have to be supplemented by the man's record and the reports of those in authority over him.

My excuse for giving so much space to this tiresome question is that I believe it to be vital to police efficiency. I have—perhaps rashly—suggested a possible line of solution, not so much in the hope of its acceptance but that it may possibly act as a stimulus to some more ingenious person to find a better plan.

This all arose out of recruiting and the need for striking a right balance between brains and brawn. Obviously precision is impossible as the most perfectly wise recruiting machine can only guess what the young man of 20-25 will be like ten years later, i.e. whether he will develop as a climber or a pedestrian. The only thing that can be done about it is to avoid over-emphasizing the educational standard. Until recently this standard was absurdly low. Some think that in correcting this, the pendulum may have swung a bit far the other way.

But let it not for a moment be thought, please, that I am in any way against giving the recruit, when you've got him, every possible encouragement to educate himself. Apart from the forced feeding that you must give him to enable him to do his job, every possible facility should be available to him to develop his knowledge of affairs—past and current—not merely police affairs, but topics of to-day and yesterday. A policeman is a public servant and in his sphere, to some extent a public character. The pronouncement of the local bobby may carry more weight with people than that of others with the same educational background. If he has a thirst for knowledge, it should be made easy for him to slake it; if he has not, it can be stimulated.

Police libraries are therefore important, and an example for others should be set by the library at Scotland Yard itself. Policemen working at Headquarters are liable to be on the whole above the average of intelligence and many of them are keen to add to their knowledge. Those of them who regard reading as something more than a way of passing the time should have at hand not only a wide selection of the right sort of books but comfortable quiet surroundings in which to browse or perhaps study.

Accommodation difficulties have up to now prevented Scotland Yard from meeting this need. For fifty years at least, it has been a "congested district" and only now, with the full occupation of the new building, has the opportunity occurred of providing a really adequate library. The books are there already and fresh purchases are constantly made, but the wretched little room in which they have lived is rather an office with books in it than a library.

Not long ago I came across a young Special Branch officer who, in casual conversation on such topics, put into my head an idea which—though perhaps obvious enough—had not intruded before. His suggestion was that the London policeman ought to know more about

London. He knows that to get to Chandos Street you must take the third on the left and the fifth on the right. In this sort of direction his precision is a by-word. But ask him why the Marble Arch sits inconsequently in the middle of the road and who put it there, why Piccadilly is called Piccadilly or why Marylebone Lane is a narrow, wiggly, thoroughfare in an area of rectangular streets, and the chances are strong that he will not be able to answer correctly. There was an instance of an A. Division (Whitehall area) constable being asked by an American sightseer for Westminster Hall, one of the most historically important buildings in his Division and directing him to the Middlesex Guildhall, a quite modern building on the west side of Parliament Square. It is true that knowledge of local history, the origin of buildings, statues and names, is not strictly any part of a policeman's duty and it could be urged that the poor man has got enough to do to keep himself up-to-date with regulations, orders and so forth. It may be said also that the number of questions that have to be answered in the street is quite large enough already and that to stimulate the addition of historical conundrums might make the policeman's life somewhat difficult.

It is true that at certain busy centres such as Piccadilly Circus a constable is expected to be a sort of walking information bureau. Why not? He is rendering a useful service to the public even if he is not detecting a great deal of crime. Already many of the questions put to him are odd enough. He exhibits no surprise if someone wants to know where to buy a pink camisole or what he recommends for the three-thirty. If, in addition, the provincial or foreign sightseer is interested in the origin of Eros or how long ago they sold hay in the Haymarket and finds that policemen are usually able to answer such questions, the added burden on the officer will not be great and the reputation of the Force will be further enhanced. At the same time a knowledge of local history and the whys and wherefores of buildings, statues and streets which he passes every day could hardly fail to add to the interest of a policeman's life and give him something to think about when things are dull and nothing much is happening.

A possible way of providing the necessary information would be to have in every police station a loose leaf book in which facts of interest were recorded relating to the immediate vicinity. Such books could be started in the Scotland Yard library where there is an ample collection of books—old and new—on London history and



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Tourist: "And is the chin-strap to keep the helmet on?"
Policeman: "No, lady, it's to rest the jaw after answering questions."

topography. They could be issued to each station with a nucleus of local information and the officers on the spot could be encouraged to add items which came to their knowledge. Additional leaves could also be issued from time to time from Headquarters if fresh information of a suitable kind came to notice.

In some parts—such as Westminster—the mass of available material is so great that selection would not be easy. Every street, every building and every open space has a wealth of history behind it and no policeman could be expected to know more than the outstanding facts. But no doubt a judicious selection could be made.

Peering into the future is an intriguing, if somewhat profitless occupation. As I see it (with such limited vision as I am able to bring to bear) there are three major problems to be faced in the police world.

The first is the problem of so adjusting the rates of pay and conditions of service that those who never rise above the rank of constable (necessarily the majority of entrants) will receive a reward for their services which will compare favourably with that obtainable in other forms of employment.

The second is the problem of offering to all entrants a *chance* of accelerated advancement in order

(a) To attract capable and ambitious men into the service from *all* educational levels;

(b) To ensure that some of the higher positions in the service will be occupied by fairly young men, and

(c) To enable the profession to produce its own Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Chief Constables.

The third is the problem of providing an incentive to energy in the later years of the service of constables who miss their chance of promotion.

The last two of these problems have been discussed to some extent already. It would seem to “stick out a mile” that if the police service is really to rank as a profession—and not merely be politely so called—it *must* offer opportunities comparable with other professions. There must be a short way to the top as well as a long way, otherwise all the top posts will go on being filled by old men or by importations from outside.

On the third point—the incentive to long service constables—I have no more to say, except to emphasize its importance. That leaves

only No. 1—pay and conditions of service. Rates of pay are a very dull subject except to the people to whom they are applied. But it would be difficult to exaggerate their importance, especially in an occupation like the police service, in which efficiency depends almost entirely on the goodwill and contentment—or otherwise—of many thousands of individuals working largely in isolation and unsupervised. It may be very sad and bad, but the pay envelope has a powerful influence on the mental health of the recipient—and his wife. Cash is a lubricant and the smooth working of the home is largely dependent on it. The vital thing is not only—or so much—the actual contents of the envelope, as its contents in comparison with other people's envelopes. How often one has seen discontent and bitterness arising from some section or grade receiving a benefit withheld—perhaps for a perfectly good reason—from some other section or grade. "'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot," or is it? Anyway, it is this "human nature business" again, producing a sense of injustice.

The theory of supply and demand, though somewhat discredited nowadays, in its application to human labour, is nevertheless unescapable. Unless an employment offers an existence as attractive as, or more attractive than, alternative possibilities, the demand for that employment will be small and the supply deficient. Hence the shortage of miners. In that case it is the "existence", not the pay that repels. Who would willingly spend his working life in heat, darkness and injurious dust, if he has the alternative of modern factory conditions?

In a policeman's life there are certain quite evident drawbacks which correspond to the drawbacks of a miner's life. Instead of heat, darkness and dust, he has night duty, discipline, responsibility and sometimes a degree of social isolation.

To compensate for these drawbacks the policeman has been offered security (so long as he behaves himself and submits to discipline) and an early pension. With national insurance, security will soon cease to be an attraction because it will be the common lot of man. The early pension will presumably remain but how far police service will in this respect be greatly superior to other occupations is as yet not very clear.

Something will clearly have to be done to counteract the effect of this diminution of attraction, or the service won't get the men it wants or be able to keep up the standard of quality it requires. Even in the old pre-war and pre-Beveridge days the supply was barely sufficient. In the Metropolitan Force anyway, there was seldom any

waiting list and it was more a case of hunting for applicants than being hunted by them.

It is difficult to see how the power of the magnet can be intensified except through the medium of the pay envelope. The drawbacks of the policeman's life are unavoidable. There must be irregular hours, there must be night duty and there must be discipline. The policeman's responsibility for the good behaviour of the community imposes a high standard of behaviour on himself. He has not the same freedom of conduct as the ordinary citizen. The ordinary citizen can "let himself go" at intervals with impunity. His access to wine, women and song is restricted only by the law of the land, social conventions and his own conscience. For the policeman an additional restriction is imposed by the rules and discipline of his service. This may or may not be irksome according to his temperament. The social isolation I referred to arises (not always of course) particularly when an officer has to live in a "bad quarter" where most of the neighbours are of a kind which makes them undesirable or embarrassing social acquaintances for a policeman.

It may be that the demobilization of a large number of young men who have acquired a taste for an active life will produce a demand from those of them who feel that police work will give them the sort of existence they want. But that source of supply will peter out before very long and when it comes to an end the service will have to compete in the open market with other kinds of employment. It would appear to be a good bet that unless some fairly drastic changes are made, the large number of men required will not be forthcoming.

All that has so far been done about police pay is to incorporate the various war-time allowances, with a few shillings extra here and there.* This is admittedly a stop-gap arrangement and those who think it will stop the gap for three years (as proposed) may prove to have been over-optimistic. As soon as some stability has been reached in the labour market a fundamental re-examination of the whole question—preferably by an outside committee—will no doubt be necessary. Until this is done existing discontents are unlikely to be allayed and the prospects of sound future recruitment must remain dubious.

The three major problems dealt with above relate to what might be called the internal politics of the police service. As to the work which lies ahead, the most urgent need would seem to be that of getting the traffic patrols back on the road. I put this before the

* Improvements since made.

prevention and detection of crime because I put life before property. It is thoroughly bad of course for a country to have a lot of crime, but it is quite intolerable that thousands of people—many of them children—should be injured and slaughtered every year. Apart from the suffering and misery produced, the sheer waste—of money, material and human effort—is a grievous burden which we cannot afford. There can be no statistical assessment of the expenditure in time and money occasioned by road accidents. Any one accident may require the services of doctors, nurses, police, ambulances and hospitals for the injured people, repair shops for the vehicles, lawyers and courts for the subsequent litigation, and insurance companies for the damage claims, to say nothing of the man-hours lost by injured workers and wages lost for their families, sickness benefit to be claimed and paid, and so on and so forth. The ramifications could be pursued further, but that is perhaps enough. Multiplied by many thousands a year all this costly effort must reach a colossal sum—so large a sum that any plan which can make a real impression on it must be worth while at almost any price.

The admirable system of training police traffic patrols evolved more than ten years ago by Lord Cottenham at the Hendon driving school has been adopted and developed with great energy and success in many provincial Forces, notably in Lancashire. The value of these patrols has been widely acknowledged and it is much to be hoped that steps may soon be taken to restore them and add to their strength.

On crime, I claim little expert knowledge. From a semi-detached viewpoint I should guess that the most hopeful lines of development are:

(1) Making uniform officers more crime-conscious and trampling at every opportunity on the idea that crime is C.I.D. business.

(2) Greater liberty of movement under the police-box system. (I need not develop this point perhaps. Any policeman will know what I mean.)

(3) The active encouragement of mechanical thief-catching devices, and (though outside the police sphere)

(4) More and more probation officers and approved schools for juveniles. Catch 'em young and keep 'em out of prison.

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